

The Hermeneutics Nexus

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Summary

Modern life is such that, confronted with the most mechanical, the most stereotypical repetitions, inside and outside ourselves, we endlessly extract from them little differences, variations and modifications. Conversely, secret, disguised and hidden repetitions, animated by the perpetual displacement of a difference, restore bare, mechanical and stereotypical repetitions, within and without us. In simulacra, repetition already plays upon repetitions, and difference already plays upon differences.

Repetitions repeat themselves, while the differentiator differentiates itself. The task of life is to make all these repetitions coexist in a space in which difference is distributed.

(Deleuze, *Difference* xviii)

Central to the development of this dissertation is the study of the relationship between text and interpretation. The project seeks to explicate, as much as possible, the main aspects of reading and meaning-making. Though I wish to offer a proposition that is both scholarly and sophisticated, this dissertation contributes to its topic by tackling what may come across as ‘simple’ or ‘naive’ questions. As such, I do not consider certain issues that are often associated with a discussion on hermeneutics. These include attempts to state the conditions of true interpretation, deduce the constituents that contribute to what appears to be valid understanding and examine the relationship between hermeneutics and praxis. Despite being pertinent issues, they are not featured as central

concerns in a dissertation where the objective is to deliver a perspective on the becoming of hermeneutics. The present thesis seeks to delineate the ‘being’ of meaning-making.

As I plan to deliberate over hermeneutics and its nature, my dissertation hinges upon the study and assembly of constituents that may lead to an understanding of how interpretation ‘is’. In light of this intention, the dissertation focuses on specific themes and not selected texts, or particular theorists. With the exception of Chapter Four: *An Interpretation of Deleuze Reading Proust*, which opens the second section of this dissertation, to a large extent, I have minimised the inclusion of textual descriptions, as well as application of practical criticisms. This is because substantial material has been documented for the purpose of illustrating and evaluating the interpretative. That is, philosophers and literary theorists amongst others have expended a considerable amount of time and effort in the critical examination of making meaning. Research that studies the ‘being’ of interpretation (i.e., interpretation studied as an ‘entity’) appears lacking in contrast. Therefore, *The Hermeneutic Nexus* seeks to contribute towards the field of hermeneutic research by addressing this apparent scarcity. I would like to advance a rigorous discussion that preoccupies itself with thinking about the existence of the interpretative.

Although I try to be comprehensive in terms of including, as well as analysing themes that are relevant to the dissertation, my reflection is necessarily limited. While this inadequacy is, in part, a consequence of my incapacity, it is a ‘lacking’ that also demonstrates the polysemic nature of interpretation. Therefore, the dissertation will be preoccupied with studying the reciprocity between ‘text’ and ‘interpretation’. Specifically, the discussion will examine the interrelationship(s) between perception,

experience and thought. I frame this affinity against the notion of ‘*making* meaning’ because I intend to posit an association between the interpretative and the yet-to-be-determined. I propose that the link between ‘interpretation’ and the ‘undeterminate’ is demonstrated through the valorisation of the ‘absent’, which will be argued as consequential of reading, processing and responding to the phenomena.

Generally, the corpus of work central to my research is contributed by theorists of a continental origin. They, include Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze. In my interpretation of the works offered by these theorists, I seek to examine the ways in which their concepts rethink, reproduce and re-establish connections that relate to a question: What does it take to pursue a discourse of thought that corresponds to a construction of meaning? The hypotheses put forth in the dissertation are unified by a trio of closely related concepts: perception, thought and meaning-making. That is, how does ‘perception’ initiate a ‘thought’ which contributes to ‘meaning-making’?

The project is an attempt to produce a sustained thesis that accounts for the ‘plural-ness’ of the interpretative. Instead of elaborating theories that are devoted to the study of hermeneutics, the dissertation, presents the ‘differencing’ and ‘deferring’ as elements that contribute to the task of making meaning. In the context of this dissertation, the ‘force’ that will come to characterise the means for interpretation is the becoming of a be-coming: a be-come-*ing* that underscores the perennial birthing of a non-presence: Nothingness.

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INTRODUCTION—A Birthing

The Hermeneutics Nexus arose out of my desire to undertake a project which investigates the nature of interpretation. Specifically, the current endeavour focuses on delineating a concept that will contribute to an understanding of the relationship between a text and an interpretation. In other words, this dissertation seeks to elaborate, as well as outline a ‘main idea’ which ultimately explains ‘how to interpret’. Because I wish to reflect on the practice of meaning making, I will be deliberating over how meaning is made so as to examine the nature of how meaning is made. Essentially, *The Hermeneutics Nexus* is about explicating the being of interpretation. Nevertheless, this dissertation is neither an attempt to map out the *de rigueur* of an interpretative practice nor a critique of the theoretical models available when researching into the subject of hermeneutics. Rather, the work here hopes to lay bare concepts that will help elucidate ‘what is it for interpretation to be’.

Consequently, central to my research topic is the speculation of what interpreting might be about. Instead of charting conditions that contribute to an interpretation, or a meaning, the aim here is to decipher ‘what does it take to make meaning’. This, in turn, implies that interpretation is a ‘process’ and not an object or thing. In short, an on-going yet-to-be-ness, or becoming, orientates *The Hermeneutics Nexus*.

Although this premise brings to light a number of difficult provocations, it is, basically, a simple assertion. The thesis at hand postulates that the being of interpretation involves ‘creation’ rather than ‘discovery’. This is to say, every exposition of ‘being’ and ‘interpretation’ posits the proliferation of new beings and interpretations. Consequently,

in context of this dissertation, thinking about ‘what might interpretation be’ will lead to a string of concepts that are ‘poststructuralist’ in essence. That is, meaning is perpetually being made within a continuous unfolding. So, concepts including the restless, plural and producing will be significant in the development of arguments to come.

Further, interpretation and its ‘undeterminateness’¹ preclude the ‘repeating’ as well as ‘differencing’. Here, ‘repeatable difference’ is, for the lack of a better word, privileged over ‘identity’ because it creates all that there can be. If the intention of this thesis was to examine the being of interpretation so as to ‘discover’ its constituents, the purpose would be to outline the nature or essence of ‘what there is’ (i.e., identity). But, this thesis interprets interpretation to be “the art of forming, inventing and fabricating concepts” (Deleuze and Guattari, *Philosophy?* 2). Therefore, ‘repeatable difference’ creates concepts for interpretation. This production is the result of responding to the speculation of ‘what is there’, which opens up a multiplicity of possibilities. By putting the repeating and differencing into action, every concept perpetuates possibilities which are, in turn, reworked into other possibilities.

The principle of creation leaves the act of interpretation unfinished and yet-to-be-determined. It is a force that sees to the manifestation of an infinite trace of possibilities to come. Thus, the fundamentals driving the ‘forth coming’ are the ‘creating’ and not the ‘created’, the ‘producing’ and not the ‘produced’, the ‘interpretable’ and not the ‘interpreted’. So, the being of interpretation is described by a repeatable difference that works to (inter)relate more and more creations, productions and interpretables. For

¹ Instead of using ‘indeterminate’, the dissertation coins the [neologism](#) ‘undeterminate’. This is because ‘indeterminate’ appears to suggest that it is possible to determine something as some thing (i.e., things can be quantified and tested). However, in context of this discussion, the undeterminate points to a ‘yet-to-be’ (i.e., a be-come-ing that is to be considered with the notion of ‘not-there’: the no-thing).

reasons that may appear logical only towards the end of this dissertation, the current disposition assumes that creation stays necessarily uncreated if it is to create. Because creativity is about the presentation of potential possibilities, the motion ‘to create’ implies a ‘not present’.

If the being of interpretation is characterised by an unfolding creativity, its ceaseless realisation is dependent on a ‘to be present’. Subsequently, the notion of the ‘becoming’ points to an infinity which liberates any creation (i.e., interpretation) from being determined. A reference to Gilles Deleuze and his explication of the concepts difference and repetition puts the present discussion into perspective. Deleuze acknowledges that two lines of research occupy his attention in *Difference and Repetition* (1968):

[. . .] one concerns a concept of difference without negation, precisely because unless it is subordinated to the identical, difference would not extend or ‘would not have to extend’ as far as opposition and contradiction; the other concerns a concept of repetition in which physical, mechanical or bare repetitions (repetition of the Same) would find their *raison d’être* in the more profound structures of a *hidden repetition in which a ‘differential’ is disguised and displaced* [my italics]. These two lines of research spontaneously came together, because on every occasion *these concepts of a pure difference and a complex repetition* seemed to connect and coalesce. *The perpetual divergence and decentring of difference corresponded closely to a displacement and a disguising within repetition* [my italics].

(xviii)

According to Deleuze, the ‘diverging’ and the ‘displacing’ initiate a ‘differentiation’ that “connects and coalesce[s]” all that ‘can exist’: “*raison d’être*” (i.e., ‘reason for Being’). So, it is possible to determine something as some ‘thing’ only because things, symbols and concepts are marked as yet-to-be-determined—the undeterminate. For instance, x can be presented as ‘ x ’ because it is not-yet-presented (i.e., unrepresented) in the first place. So, the presentability of x is dependent on a “hidden repetition”. And this ‘differentiality’ refers to an ‘absent’ that ‘decentres’ and ‘disguises’. Thus, x becomes ‘ x ’ within the event of a differentiating sameness. Because the effect of a spontaneity is brought about by pure differencing and complex repeating, that which ‘can be’, or ‘is to be’, is determined by its own condition of (im)possibility: the repeatable differencing of a “repetition of the Same”.

Hence, because the possibility of interpreting something as some ‘thing’ is already in place, it is possible to interpret. That is to say, the ‘yet-to-be-ness’ of the undetermined admits a potential (i.e., the condition of something being possible). For instance, Gottlob Frege posits that idioms employ different markers to reference certain specific meanings. Further, a marker retains its assigned meaning(s) even though the relationship between the two is not a given. He says,

I adopt this fundamental idea of distinguishing two kinds of symbols [. . .] in order to make it generally applicable in the wider domain of pure thought. Accordingly, I divide all the symbols I use into those that can give us ideas of various things and those that have a fully determinate sense. The first kinds are letters, and their main task is to be the expression

of *generality*. For all their indeterminateness, it must be laid down that in a given context a letter *retains* the meaning once given to it.

(Frege 1)

The above citation shows that Frege admits to “adopt[ing]” a particular methodology for the purpose of understanding and interpreting a “given context”. By choosing to make a distinction between two categories of symbols/markers, which will help to deduce the meaning of non-linguistic and linguistic expressions, he exercises a kind of ‘authority’. For instance, he envisages a concept which distinguishes between “pure thought” and “fundamental idea”, “*generality*” and “*fully determinate*”, and ‘unknowable’ and ‘knowable’, which sets the conditions for processing an interpretation. An inclusive survey of occurrences that take place within a phenomenon, Frege’s method advocates, anticipates and produces a synthetic construct. As such, meaning-making involves setting up a premise and looking for another premise to validate it. This synthesis demonstrates Deleuze’s assertion concerning the perpetual divergence and decentring of a difference that corresponds closely to a displacement which recurs within the repetitive (*Difference* xviii).

And so the above example, which outlines Frege’s explanation of how symbols/markers are deployed, exemplifies the complication involving hermeneutical research. That is, in what ways can the relationship between a representation/symbol/marker and a meaning be determined? For instance, ‘d-o-g’ refers to a domesticated carnivorous mammal that has, amongst other characteristics, prominent canine teeth, a slender muzzle and (mostly) erected ears. In context of the English idiom, ‘d-o-g’ is presented and re-presented as ‘dog’ and not anything else. Otherwise,

representation will not be able to repeatedly present that which is thought to exist in a phenomenon. Consequently, to a certain extent, truth must be a precursor of representation. But, ‘d-o-g’ is ‘dog’, if, and only if, it is true that d-o-g’ is indeed ‘dog’. So, it is only within the boundary of the English idiom that ‘d-o-g’ is ‘dog’ (i.e., a fixed representation of something as some thing).

As such, any representation can only produce a version of what is considered as ‘true’. Furthermore, taking into account that there will always be two, followed by three, followed by four . . . truths, more and more versions are set to come. Because this ‘coming’ is essentially an undeterminable surplus, it cannot be conceived through a dogmatic representation. Therefore, the representations that are, and will be, associated with ‘d-o-g’ are neither marked nor bounded by strict parameters (i.e., ‘d-o-g’ = ‘dog’). In other words, ‘representation’ does not (and, in the first place, *cannot*) encapsulate the spontaneity of a marker, which tends to differ and defer². And so, apart from ‘dog’, ‘mammal’ and ‘companionship’, ‘d-o-g’ will come to reference more and more other meanings.

To-date, though research on the subject aims at addressing the theory and practice of interpretation, the valuable findings do not clear up the problems shrouding it. In an attempt to present a perspective of the hermeneutic nexus, this dissertation plans to propose the ‘yet-to-be-determined’ as a condition for describing how meaning is *to-be-made* (c.f., Frege and his analytic philosophy demonstrate one way of making meaning). In addressing the yet-to-be-determined, the interpretative is situated (with)in the

² On representation, Deleuze says, “[It] fails to capture the affirmed world of difference. Representation has only a single centre, a unique and receding perspective, and in consequence a false depth. It mediates everything, but mobilises and moves nothing” (*Difference* 55-56).

interpretative. It posits that the making of meaning is inherent *within* the making of meaning. Specifically, the argument will refer to the concept of ‘immanence’. On the whole, the thesis foregrounds a ‘withinness’ from which meaning-making systematically assembles, effects and unfolds.

Inevitably, this dissertation explores its area of interest from a particular angle. As the thesis is concerned with the reciprocity between text and interpretation, it includes specific concepts and studies selected issues that will contribute to the subject of meaning making. It would like to derive a quasi-paradigm, a ‘method’ of initiating the interpretative, through which the activities of reading, processing and understanding are engaged.

In spite of the wish to lay out a method of interpretation, its elucidation is encumbered by an enigma. After all, the problems that are associated with the subject of hermeneutics are plenty and varied. In order to articulate the concerns that are of importance to the topic of this dissertation, a brief survey of its genesis needs to follow. For a start, the hermeneutic tradition can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy. Both Plato and Aristotle advocated *hermeneutice*, the Greek version of the now Latinised marker, as a theory of interpretation. Although Plato was first to deploy *hermeneutice* in several dialogues, which dealt with the contrast between *sophia* and hermeneutic knowledge, it was Aristotle who further developed the concept by relating it with semantics and logic.

The application of hermeneutics as an access to studying the problematics involving textual understanding continued through the Middle Ages and Renaissance. By and large, these eras were preoccupied with the task of finding a correct way to analyse,

explain and interpret the Bible. Hermeneutic inquiry took on a new direction under the influence of Schleiermacher, Droysen and Dilthey. Generally, hermeneutics was deployed as a strategy for justifying what objectivity might be. That is to say, apart from being a method developed for the purpose of interpreting a distinct genre (e.g., the Bible), hermeneutics evolved into a field of study in its own right.

The theories which Martin Heidegger expounded contribute to the development of what may be thought of as ‘modern’ hermeneutics. To a large extent, his work, which maps out the fundamental conditions of Man’s existence, highlights the correlation between hermeneutics and ontology. Because he saw hermeneutics as a way of interpreting and envisioning life, it no longer remained as a method for understanding, or a thrust at communication. Although Heidegger did not deal explicitly with hermeneutic issues after the publication of *Sein und Zeit* (1927), his arguments found continuity in the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer.

Presently, a staple feature of literary study is the appropriation of hermeneutics as an interrogation of the receptive and interpretative. Theorists whose investigations are characterised as ‘hermeneutical’ or ‘interpretative’ include Paul Ricoeur, Jürgen Habermas and Andrés Ortiz-Osés. Broadly speaking, they seek the means to bridge the gap between ‘ontological’ and ‘critical’ hermeneutics.

The desire to interpret is complicated by the fact that a single work can yield a variety of disparate texts³. Because a piece of work can yield many texts, so to speak, the focus of contemporary hermeneutics is to examine how one interpretation relates to

³ Roland Barthes argues that the concept of ‘work’ is juxtaposed with that of ‘text’. According to him, “*The text is experienced only in an activity of production*” and so a “work can be held in the hand, [while] the text is held in language” (Barthes 193).

another. This ‘adjusting’ between an interpretation and other interpretations anticipates a reciprocity that frames the sustainability of a hermeneutic dynamism. Hence, in context of this dissertation, a ‘plural-ness’ constitutes the interpretability of some thing as something.

The orientation of this dissertation is to think about the interpretative in terms of the producibility and dynamism of a text. As interpretations relate with other interpretations within a network of undetermined possibilities, this ‘yet-to-be-ness’ anticipates a chain of ceaselessness, which is determined by the ‘absent’. Therefore, this dissertation purports that hermeneutics is the study of how a text opens up a space of possible possibilities, which, invariably, undermines ‘definitive’ interpretations. A disposition that favours differing, the thesis argues that the reciprocity between text and interpretation is always deferring. So, interpretation presents itself as a version of itself. Ultimately, this shifting determinateness is indebted to a ‘bountiful void’, or ‘nothing’. This discussion posits that a ‘no-thing’ precludes the momentary representation of every thing as something. In a metaphoric sense, there seems to be no escape from Cypher’s returning extension of its camaraderie to Exegesis.

The interpretative is a fabrication of the ‘uncompletable’ which presents itself through a chain of cannot-be-presented (i.e., the ‘unpresentable’) interpretations. As such, meaning-making is characterised by a repeating difference as well as a repeatable differencing. This premise acknowledges that there is always another meaning ‘to be made’. Therefore meaning making defers within itself. And, meaning-making presents itself within a passing when it momentarily becomes in a becoming. Therefore making meaning differs within itself. Thus, exacerbated by undeterminateness, hermeneutics

cannot be approached via mechanical applications of pre-determined criteria. As a result, features salient to a text are reinterpreted again and again without a 'final interpretation'. On account of this 'non-conclusiveness', hermeneutic research is often burdened with descriptors, such as 'pointless', 'tautological' and 'vague'. However, can the association of hermeneutics with ambiguity be a case of mere misunderstanding? The example of a sorites paradox sheds some light.

Suppose that Mary is playing with a heap of sand. If she removes one grain of sand from the pile, it still remains 'a heap'. If she continues to remove single grains of sand from the heap, when does the heap of sand stop being a 'heap of sand'? To see where this example leads, it needs to be illustrated more precisely and so assuming that the heap consists of 100,000 grains of sand. If 100,000 grains of sand is considered a 'heap', so would 99,000 grains, 98,000 grains, 97,000 grains, and so forth. As grains of sand continue to be removed from the heap, soon there will be but three, two and one grain left. Certainly, one, two, or three grains of sand cannot be considered 'a heap'. This situation calls for an analysis of three plausible premises: i) regardless of the quantity, all collections of sand are 'a heap'; ii) regardless of the quantity, all collections of sand are not 'a heap'; and iii) to reject certain aspects that are found in premises (i) and (ii). In an attempt to resolve the paradox involving the marker 'heap', several perspectives have been generated. These include theories offered by Bertrand Russell (i.e., the creation of a 'logically ideal language'), Timothy Williamson (i.e., the 'epistemic' response) and Michael Dummett (i.e., the notion of 'supervaluation', which deals with subjunctive premise and vagueness).

The ambiguity raised by sorites paradoxes, such as the one mentioned above, is an outcome of re-thinking assumptions that have been taken as granted. Further, this cross-examination eventually leads to a (contrived) resolution of inconsistencies. Ultimately, paradoxes raise problems only to seek and arrive at unified solutions, which eliminate inconsistencies. Since a similar/common problem afflicts any one category of paradox, the solution offered in one specific case-study is automatically applied to all others of the same type.

For instance, in order to make sense of the paradox of the heap, Russell, Williamson and Dummett aim to deduce how the marker, 'heap', is to be interpreted. In this context, the problematics of interpretation is read as 'semantic' in nature. Hence, the interpretative is studied as an interpretation of symbols and markers (e.g., how do they relate to the world, to the subject and the object). This perspective promotes hermeneutics as a discourse that strives 'to interpret'.

While the application of interpretation as a tool for making meaning is a worthy cause in its own right, the dissertation at hand is more concerned with studying the 'being' of interpretation, or '*of*' interpretation itself. Thus, the project sets reasoning out the 'nature' of interpretation as its goal. This intended objective appears naive especially since research to date appears incapable of satisfactorily solving many issues that confront the subject. In fact, a persistent dilemma impedes any attempt to understand the interpretative nature of hermeneutics. Can meaning 'be made' if in the first place the act of meaning-making is to rely on a body of 'yet-to-be-made' prior knowledge?

Nevertheless, even if it is really a case of rigorous hermeneutic circularity, the causality does not explain itself; it needs to be explained. Thus, the dissertation looks

forward to delivering a proposition that can mitigate the hermeneutical dilemma, whilst maintaining its integrity as a subject about interpretative possibilities. Also, as the project progresses towards delineating the (plausible) entities of meaning-making, it also seeks to observe how principal constituents function and interconnect.

A number of issues have surfaced in the midst of investigating arguments that help shape the prospective view which this dissertation is to undertake. Although they were all equally legitimate considerations, the following three top the lengthy list. They are ‘what contributes to the concept of perception’, ‘what contributes to the concept of experience’ and ‘what contributes to the concept of thinking’. The crystallisation of these three issues into but one anticipates an inquiry that involves an explication of the ‘unpresentable’. Furthermore, this ‘cannot-be-presented’ is correlated to the notion of ‘no-thingness’.

The three considerations mentioned above frame the development of this dissertation because it wishes to develop an argument that will approximate the interrelations between representations of subject and object when situated in an event of interpreting meaning. Therefore, the task at hand focuses on presenting, analysing and inscribing ideas that are related to perception (i.e., perceiving), mental image (i.e., thought) and meaning-making (i.e., the ‘absent’). That is, how does ‘perception’ initiate a ‘mental image’, which contributes to the process of making meaning? From the outset, the discussion will like to state the following. The ‘force’ that will come to characterise the means for meaning making is the becoming of a be-coming: a be-come-*ing* that will see to the perennial birthing of a non-presence: No-thingness.

The concerns that occupy this dissertation are worthy of time and effort because thinking about hermeneutics is not merely about devising more and more standards against which competing interpretations are weighed and measured. Also, the thesis, as it is intended, wants to highlight the limited sense of speaking about ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect’ methods of interpretation. This is particularly so when even agreeable and recognised foundations of knowledge generate a fundamental predicament. That is, if it is impossible to affirm any method of interpretation as ‘true’, is meaning making to be understood as ‘relative’ then? If this is the sole recourse, where will such a conclusion, which purports that all interpretations are equally valid, eventually lead?⁴ Hence, instead of examining premises that will eventually lead to the situation of having to deal with an impasse, the discussion decides to take an alternative path. In short, the dissertation will put forward arguments that bear the mark of ‘restlessness’. This ‘transitoriness’ highlights a ‘to-be-ness’ which frames meaning making.

The disposition to construct more and more new idioms is a legitimate tendency. After all, the practise of hermeneutics appears to generate a propensity ‘to create’. According to Frege, the relation between names or signs would hold only in so far as they named or designated something; it would be mediated by the connexion of each of the two signs with the same designated things (56). So, markers do not necessarily reflect actual representations of how things are. For instance, ‘ $a = a$ ’ and ‘ $a = b$ ’ are equations that carry different implications. So, in order to equate ‘ a ’ with ‘ a ’, ‘ $a = a$ ’ must be known *a priori*. And, in the case of ‘ $a = b$ ’, the relation between ‘ a ’ and ‘ b ’ depends on the

⁴ Maria Baghramian explores the connection between the relative and interpretation in *Relativism* (2004). See pp. 152-155; 165-170; and, 245-249.

meaning(s) that is(/are) assigned to 'a' and 'b'. However, if 'a' and 'b' are regarded as 'equal', 'a = a' and 'a = b' cannot be different then.

Frege points out the arbitrary "connexion" between representation and interpretation when he says, "Nobody can be forbidden to use any arbitrarily producible event or object as a sign for something" (57). Since the correlation between a sign and its signification(s) is arbitrary, an interpretation is defined through its difference from other interpretations—'many interpretations can be made'. For instance, a sentence like $a = b$ would no longer refer to the subject matter, but only to its mode of designation. Thus, the act of interpretation expresses no proper knowledge (57).

In order to demonstrate how signs are polysemic in essence, which leads to an overdetermined signification in turn, a brief analysis of an excerpt from John Donne's "The Flea" follows.

Marke but this flea, and marke in this,
How little that which though deny'st me is;
Mee it suck'd first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea, our two bloods mingled bee;
Confesse it, this cannot be said
A sinne, or shame, or losse of maidenhead,
Yet this enjoyes before it wooe,
And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two,
And this, alas, is more than wee would doe.

(Gardner 57)

In this first stanza of the poem, the marker ‘flea’ is deployed to connote several things. For a start, the speaker uses the flea as an instrument of persuasion. Clearly, a speaker-listener relationship is established because the poem opens with someone saying “Marke but this flea”. As the speaker proceeds to present his argument, the flea takes on the image of a ‘host’ through which the relationship between the speaker and his lover is ‘consummated’⁵. He says, “marke *in* [. . .] this flea, our two bloods mingled bee” [my italics]. By the end of this clause, apart from the abovementioned, ‘flea’ is made to connote at least two other meanings.

First, ‘flea’ is reduced to being “but” a flea. This lack of worthiness is exacerbated when the speaker says, “How little that which though deny’st me is”. In context of the argument to come, he seems to trivialise physical intimacy as the act is compared to the ‘mingling of blood’ within a menial flea. Second, the flea sucking “mee” and “thee”, which leads to the exchange of bodily fluids, suggests intercourse of some kind. Altogether, the speaker argues that since the both of them have already consummated “in [the] flea”, why should the lover “deny’st” him something as “little” as her virginity.

In fact, the speaker continues to belittle the “losse of maidenhead” as he tries to convince his lover to accept his initiation. He asserts that the rupture of the hymen “cannot be said/A sinne, or shame” because even a flea “enjoyes” her blood “before it wooe[s]”—the speaker presents an illogical argument here as the loss of maidenhead is inevitably linked to the commitment of sin (i.e., religious context) and the bringing on of shame (i.e., social context). The stanza ends with a hint of resentment as the speaker airs his dissatisfaction that “alas”, in comparison to him, the flea enjoys a more “pamper’d”

⁵ In the second stanza of the poem, the speaker says, “This flea is you and I, and this/Our marriage bed and marriage temple is [. . .]” (l. 12-13).

relationship with the lover. By expressing his regret that the moment shared between the flea and his lover is “more than wee would doe”, the speaker appears to be jealous of the flea, which is “swell[ed] with one blood made of two”.

The above short analysis of stanza one of “The Flea” shows Donne’s use of irony, wit and wordplay—metaphysical conceit. For instance, ‘flea’ is a metaphor for several unlikely personifications. These include the ‘flea’ being all at once an instrument of persuasion, a temple of consummation, an expression of a moral stance, and a love rival. This reading of Donne’s work exemplifies the difficulties involving interpretation. For a start, the ‘undecidability’ and ‘inter-text-uality’ that are borne out of a work seem to deliberately resist determination⁶. Though the critique of a work reaches an interpretation at one point or another, the outcome is in no way a conclusion. This is because the unity and coherence that are associated with the notion of a conclusion are challenged by an arbitrariness that mediates between signs and signs, and significations and significations, and interpretations and interpretations⁷.

The differencing and deferring between signs, significations and interpretations point to a ‘repression’. And, this ‘force’ presides over an unfolding of differences and deferences within entities themselves. This is to say, a certain rigorous logic (pre-)exists to effect the openness—the unconstructiveness—of a text (i.e., the ‘yet-to-be-constructed’ text). Consequently, the central concern of this dissertation is to develop a

⁶ With regards to the practice of reading, Jacques Derrida says, “Within the closure, by an oblique and always perilous movement, constantly risking falling back within what is being deconstructed, it is necessary to surround the critical concepts with a careful and thorough discourse—to mark the conditions, the medium, and the limits of their effectiveness and to designate rigorously their intimate relationship to the machine whose deconstruction they permit [. . .]” (*Grammatology* 14).

⁷C.f., Frege, “But this relation would hold between the names or signs only in so far as they named or designated something. It would be mediated by the connexion of each of the two signs with the same designated things. But this is arbitrary” (17-18).

proposition, a theory of meta-interpretation, which will explain the nature of meaning-making. In view of this intention, the discussion understands interpretation to be an activity that initiates a self-reflexive discourse. Furthermore, this ‘looking inward’ is sustained through a web of intricate connections, which inter- as well as intra- relate signs and significations. Thus, every sign/signification/interpretation exists only in relation to other signs/significations/interpretations. Thus, a text circulates within the unfolding of a discourse itself.

Subsequently, a surplus of possible interpretations underscores the creating of an interpretation. This polysemousness suggests that meaning-making is not dictated by traditional boundaries, such as those prescribed by determinism and *logos*⁸. Because interpretation, as described here, is neither tied down nor confined by a specific signification, the process of transforming a piece of work must remain ‘not-determinable’. For instance, the interpretation of “The Flea” is not defined by the language in the poem. If this is the case, ‘f-l-e-a’ will refer to ‘flea’ and nothing else. However, due to an absent present (e.g., the determinable or *logos*-centric) the interpretability of ‘f-l-e-a’ falls short of itself and is thereby irreducible. In short, ‘f-l-e-a’ refers to a yet-to-be-ness: ~~flea~~: an absence.

The outcome of contesting significations and marginalising differences is the constitution of ‘other’. The negotiations within a vocabulary of meanings assign the interpretation of ‘this’ as ‘this’ and not ‘that’. All is well, except for the likelihood that regardless of its pedigree of exposition, any representation is but a re-presentation of an

⁸ A deterministic, or *logos*-centric discourse subscribes to an ‘unalterable’. The idea that something is determinable or pervasive points to a structure that is in essence, orderly. In other words, all events result as an effect of a central effect.

‘other’. That is, the unrepresentable re-presentation—a possibility which suggests that perhaps representation is ‘othered’ by ‘nothing’. The void opened up by no-thingness precipitates an unconditional ‘beyond’ that is maintained through a steadfast multiplication of ‘other(s)’ within an *other-ring*. The continuous unfolding of a borderless othering is regarded as a mirror of infinitude. This is a valid assertion because interpretation in all its varied forms, including deliberating, believing and calculating, is always expressed in the form of the ‘other’ (i.e., ‘that’) and not the represented (i.e., ‘this’). In short, interpretation is of a singular pluralness.

When speaking about the plurality of the interpretative, it seems appropriate to consider the relationship between interpretation and thinking. That is, how does thinking foster meaning-making? The act of thinking (e.g., reasoning, believing and understanding) appears to be closely associated with the inclination ‘to interpret’. However, it is difficult to establish why a certain object generates a certain image, which culminates in a certain interpretation. In other words, what binds a tangible object and intangible concept together?

Does thinking x dispose the thought to interpretation ‘ x ’? The wish to explain how the mind interprets something contributes to the inception of several theoretical frameworks, which result from the employment of formal logic, as well as concepts that relate to mental representation and visual images. Generally speaking, these approaches seek to explicate the issue ‘How does a subject interpret’. For instance, formal logic is deployed to understand how representation functions. Therefore, propositional and predicate calculus and inferences are some of the means that have been developed to articulate knowledge. These methods contribute to the development of a logic that is

‘formal’ in essence. They refer to the language of formal logic that is based on semantics and/or a deductive system. Subsequently, there are two aspects to the interpretation of x as ‘ x ’. The deductive aspect of an idiom codifies the (possible) inferences that are assigned to x . And, the semantic aspect of the same idiom codifies the (possible) meanings that are assigned to x .⁹ So, x is ‘ x ’ because the logic underlying the reading of x constitutes a deducible and thus valid interpretation. But, how do deducibility and validity, which validate formal logic, relate to correct interpretation?

In *The Language of Thought* (1975), Jerry A. Fodor puts forward two arguments. First, thinking involves the manipulation of symbols. And second, the expression of a thought involves the correspondence of conventional symbols (e.g., perceptual experience) to a mental language (i.e., an interiority)¹⁰. The arguments that Fodor advances convey two salient points. On the one hand, it is possible to interpret because the structure of thought—thinking—parallels that of language—expression. Thus, the interpretation of x as ‘ x ’ equates x to ‘ x ’. And on the other hand, it is possible to allocate meanings to markers because they are devoid of an intrinsic meaning to begin with. Thus, the interpretation of x as ‘ x ’ is dependent on the meanings that are assigned to it. However, this theory, which seeks to outline a language of thought, appears inadequate. If it is a necessity to explain why x is interpreted as ‘ x ’, it must also be necessary to explain how x is interpreted as ‘ x ’. That is to say, if a mental language validates the

⁹ With reference to the following titles:

- i) Frege, Gottlob. *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*. Eds. Peter Geach and Max Black. Oxford: Blackwell, 1960;
- ii) Montague, Richard. *Formal Philosophy*. Ed. Richmond H. Thomason. New Haven: Yale UP, 1974; and
- iii) Quine, W.V.O. *Philosophy of Logic*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970.

¹⁰ With reference to Fodor’s concept of language learning. The discussion regards the expression of a thought as the manifestation of an interpretation.

interpretation of x , something else must validate this very ‘mentalness’. But, if the mental is acknowledged as some thing that is ‘intrinsically present’, then, similarly, the interpretation of x must be accepted as ‘ x ’ without the need for any justification (i.e., x is ‘ x ’). After all, if ‘mental language’ can be left as a non-derivative, so can the motion ‘to interpret’.

At its best, the language of thought hypothesis, which Fodor, Zenon W. Pylyshn and Gary F. Marcus advocate¹¹, explains experiences that are empirical by nature. These include how thought is being produced and how thinking is being systemised. Because interpretation, like the understanding of x as ‘ x ’, consists of constituents that are syntactic and semantic in structure, the language-of-thought-type of method is useful in defining contents that are ‘propositional’ in essence. However, x is ‘ x ’, only if it means that x is ‘ x ’¹². That is to say, the ascription of what x may come to represent becomes dependent on a structure of intentions through which it is interpreted. And this premise raises a host of issues which require detailed analyses. They include the following: Can the specificity of an intention be justified? How does a specific ‘some thing’ correlate with a specific intention? Can ‘incorporeal’ substances, such as experience, memory and sensory process, be ‘known’? Consider this proposition: If there is no adequate way to re-represent the incorporeal, perhaps this ‘not-there’ is to be re-presented as a ‘nothing’. In context of this dissertation, this ‘nothingness’ refers to a ‘no-thing’.

¹¹ Arguments that support the language of thought hypothesis can be found in the following works:

i) Fodor, Jerry A. *The Language of Thought*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1975;
ii) Pylyshn, Zenon W. *Computation and Cognition: Toward a Foundation for Cognitive Science*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986; and
iii) Marcus, Gary F. *The Algebraic Mind :integrating Connectionism and Cognitive Science*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001.

¹² With particular reference to the propositional content which ‘that-clauses’ bear. For instance, Fodor believes that x is ‘ x ’.

The idea of ‘no-thingness’ may seem to convey an air of deliberate convolution. If this criticism, which censures against critiquing for critiquing’s sake, is an accurate one, then the theory of interpretation put forward here will no longer fulfil its central mission of responding to Socrates’ question, ‘What is x ?’ Hence, there is no intention of coining new idioms and meanings unless they contribute to the description of how ‘ x ’ may come about. Basically, the dissertation will attempt to delineate entities that have a direct impact on the construction of an interpretation. Therefore, the discussion seeks to tackle issues including ‘what does it take to perceive’, ‘what is the role played by a subject’ and ‘how does meaning make’. This is to say, on a whole, the thesis intends to reinterpret the recurring arguments that concern a study of interpretation.

On the assumption that the trace of thought/s leads the precipitation of thought right back to a non-present, maybe x is characterised by a disguised transposition within itself. As the discussion outlines the discourse that articulates x , it seeks to posit conditions which lead up to knowing x , albeit always insufficiently. Therefore, thinking about thought dispenses a restless spontaneity, whereby from thought, to thought, to thought . . . ∞ there is only an absent thought. As such, the thesis proposes that thought can only be ‘made present’ if, and only if, it can be immanently presented as a ‘there is’. So, the presence of a non-presentable thought can be represented by the marker ~~thought~~. Nevertheless, the intention behind this apparent scepticism is not to deny the legitimacy of information classified as ‘reliable knowledge’.

The occurrence of an event, like ‘a thought’ and ‘an interpretation’, is composed by a series of undisrupted happenings. That is, the realisation of something taking place is marked by moments that unfold within those very moments themselves. For instance,

processes, such as the thinking of 'x' and the interpreting of 'x', are made up by moment-within-moment transformations which are connected (i.e., a moment is causally related to another moment) and intentional (i.e., moments exist within moments because they can be represented). Because an event seems to be an expression of a coherence that appears to be 'specific', it conveys a sense of 'there is'. So, x indeed represents x and nothing else. Nevertheless, can x be determined as x when the potentiality that arises from the synthesis of x s, within x s, within x s . . . ∞ points to a momentariness as well as transitoriness that predicate an infinity? So, can x indeed represent x and nothing else? As such, 'there is x ' ought to be re-presented as 'is there x '. In other words, from x s, within x s, within x s . . . ∞ there is only the x -less. Ultimately, the return to \bar{x} sets itself against all appropriations of it as 'is'.

Yet, can x be observed through the absent? Also, how can the absent supplement a presence, which, in turn, presents a possibility of possibilities? Can presence enter into the present when its very constitution perpetrates an 'other-ing' that determines a relentless departing from itself? Consider this possibility: Because absence is an accompaniment to the 'beginning' and 'end' of x , the making of x cannot exist anywhere else other than within the presence of that which is not-there. For instance, as a constitution of thought's interiority, thinking takes place in a condition that is essentially present (i.e., a 'there is'). However, because of this very 'interiority', the presentness of the thought is situated within an unrepresentable (i.e., a 'not-there'). With reference to the infinitude opened up by —ing, in a metaphoric sense, this (non)presence is likened to a converging junction, whereby crossroads opened up by the problematics of meaning-making may meet. In a way, because absence anoints becoming, this *re-present-ing* in

itself refracts all possible representations of thought (or x for that matter). That is, being singular plural¹³. Hence, the plural incarnations of thought conflate within the singularity of the thought-less. That is, a One/Many¹⁴.

In order to elaborate on what ‘One/Many’ may come to mean, this discussion turns to examine the concept of ‘manifold’¹⁵. Though the intention is not to explicate ‘what does manifold constitute’, for the purpose of advancing the argument to come, it is probably useful to include a general understanding of the term here. The concept of manifold is explained through its association with topology, geometry and algebra. According to Deleuze and Guattari, who reference Charles Lautman’s interpretation of Riemann, the manifold is

[. . .] pure patchwork. It has connections, or tactile relations. It has rhythmic values not found elsewhere, even though they can be translated into a metric space. Heterogeneous, in continuous variation, it is a smooth space, insofar as smooth space is amorphous and not homogeneous. We can thus define two positive characteristics of smooth space[/manifold] in general: when there are determinations that are part of one another and pertain to enveloped distances or ordered differences, independent of magnitude; when, independent of metrics, determinations arise that cannot

¹³ Nancy, Jean Luc. *Being Singular Plural*. Eds. Werner Hamacher and David E. Wellbery. Trans. Robert D. Richardson and Anne E. O’Byrne. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000.

¹⁴ The idea of One/Many presented here does not particularly reference, or intentionally reinterpret theories that Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas posit. The thesis elaborates on its use of the concept, One/Many, in the following paragraphs.

¹⁵ C.f., The Continuum edition of Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s book, *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004). With specific reference to this piece of work, the idea of manifold can be traced back to the theories put forth by G.W. Leibniz and Bernhard Riemann.

be part of another but are connected by processes of frequency or accumulation.

(*Thousand* 536)

This is to say, a ‘thing’ not only exists independently, but also bears certain specific characteristics. For instance, a manifold of some things that comprise a set of defined properties help x become x . However, the independence that a ‘thing’ possesses does not translate into disconnectedness from other ‘things’. That is, a manifold of some other things contribute to the set of defined properties which help x become x . To a large extent, this proposition points to a process that is both relational and transversal in nature. The ‘relating’ and the ‘transversing’ assemble the heterogeneous within a homogeneity, a singularity within a pluralness, a one within a many-ness. Thus,

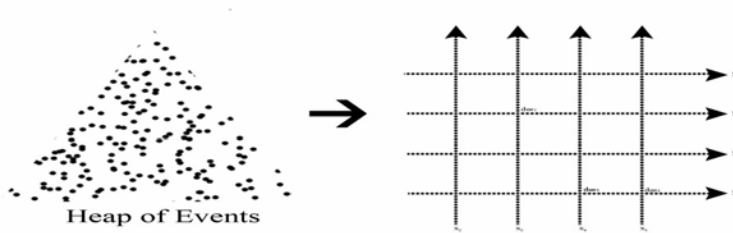
the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture: smooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space [. . .] An aggregate of intrication of this kind is in no way *homogeneous*: it is nevertheless smooth, and contrasts point by point with the space of fabric (*it is in principle infinite, open, and unlimited in every direction*; it has neither top nor bottom nor centre; it does not assign fixed and mobile elements but rather *distributes a continuous variation*) [my italics].

(Deleuze and Guattari,
Thousand 524-525)

The One/Many fosters the creating of a thing through its singular becoming, which anticipates an aggregation of (re)connections. Subsequently, the potential of any thing to become some thing is realised through a network of things that inter- and intra-

relate. The result of this (re)assembling is an unfolding of new potentials, connections and ‘things’. The following example will help explain the many-re-un-folding of a thing.

Within the “smooth space” which Deleuze and Guattari talk about, there exists a heap of events waiting to happen. But, unless these events-in-the-waiting are contextualised by a particular occurrence, they will remain as mere ‘some things’. So, assuming that every event corresponds to a set of x and y axes, then, a series of events will chain up to form some ‘things’. The diagram illustrates the concept of smooth space.



Clearly, events come together to signify ‘things’ when they connect through the process of intra-and inter-relation. Therefore, events that are found along the x_2 and y_2 make up ‘ x_2 ’ and ‘ y_2 ’, while those that are found along x_3 and y_3 make up ‘ x_3 ’ and ‘ y_3 ’. This statement bears three implications. Firstly, the x and y axes in the diagram describe a correlation between an event and other events. Secondly, the organisation of events under certain conditions (in this case, a condition that forms the x- and y-axis respectively) demonstrates an assembling that maps the heterogeneous within a homogenous. So, an event only becomes ‘an event’ under a specific circumstance. Thirdly, events are free to re-relate, reproduce and refold. For instance, $d_{\infty 2}$, $d_{\infty 3}$, $d_{\infty 4} \dots d_{\infty}$ are inter-changeable because they are intra-related. In other words, the two dots that cut to create a specific intersection, for example, $d_{\infty 2}$, occur ‘accidentally’. Since the dots that make up $d_{\infty 2}$, $d_{\infty 3}$

and $d_{\infty 4}$ originate from the same heap of yet-to-organised events, their ability to represent something must be ‘not determined’ (i.e., $d_{\infty 2}, d_{\infty 3} d_{\infty 4} \dots d_{\infty}$). The ‘inherent-ness’ between points that intrachange and interrelate highlights an open-ended synthesis which randomly ‘become’ within a many-fold¹⁶. Essentially, this manifold represents the realisation of many as one and the manifestation of one as many.

The concept of One/Many, which foregrounds the notion of a pure interiority, raises an immediate issue. How can ‘one’ be ‘many’? That is to say, ‘one’ being singular is the ‘one and only’, while ‘many’ being plural represents ‘more than one’. However, because ‘one’ encompasses ‘many’ within itself, the unfolding of the multiple folds into an inside. By virtue of this inward manifestation of one-many, the creativity that constitutes One/Many entails that one is nothing more than a fold of the many. As such, events like $d_{\infty 2}, d_{\infty 3} d_{\infty 4} \dots d_{\infty}$ are determined by a re-un-folding of the differing and deferring which produces the same, but never the exact same. As such, One/Many is a signifier of itself and becoming itself a signifier.

Hence, the notion of One/Many points to a creation that produces possibilities and, ultimately, the infinite. And, this creativity is sustained by a missing which can be understood as an abstract gap that is quasi-causal in essence. In other words, all the significations that One/Many produces are becomings which are extended from a *no-thingness*. Further, this no-thing precedes, demarcates and determines every possible possibility, or be-come-ing. For instance, in order to interpret x as ‘ x ’, its interpretation is based on the premise that there is, so to speak, no ‘ x ’ to begin with. Further, the interpretation of x must engage the lawlessness of a no-thing that is invariably dependent

¹⁶ The subject of immanence will be discussed in detail later.

on the ‘absent’ in its germination. Hence, a performing —*ing* is central to the expression of any event as some thing. That is, a perpetuality sustains the re-representation of events as they assemble to be-come an event: a doubling of be-*ing* and be-come-*ing*.

Although, currently, the explication of becoming and ‘doubleness’ comes across as vague, the discussion wishes to point out that these two concepts contribute to the understanding of making meaning. Interpretation, like the creation of an event, is subjected to the run-of-the-mill, moment-to-moment precipitation, or ‘unfolding’. While ‘undecidability’ appears to be prevalent of interpretation, the process of making meaning cannot be summed up as ‘relativistic’ or ‘indeterminate’.

Though there is more than one way of interpreting what relativism may come to mean, the discussion at hand identifies the position that is undertaken by Karl R. Popper¹⁷. He asserts that “One of the components of modern irrationalism is relativism (the doctrine that truth is relative to our intellectual background)” (Popper 33). According to Popper, the thesis of relativism legitimises the indifferent, nihilistic and anarchistic. On the one hand, when construed as positive, these characteristics accredit relativism to be egalitarian¹⁸. On the other hand, when viewed negatively, these very same qualities also deem it tautological. Similarly, the indeterminate seems to imply that there is no way of verifying the accuracy or inaccuracy of any thing¹⁹. This no-right-approach endorses a

¹⁷ With reference to Karl R. Popper, *The Myth of the Framework: In Defence of Science and Rationality*. Ed. M.A. Notturmo. London: Routledge, 1994. While Popper’s perspective on the relative is supported by others, including Hilary Putnam and Richard Rorty, their viewpoints—that relativism tends to lean towards the indifferent, nihilistic and anarchistic—do not come across as clear as his.

¹⁸ With reference to Robert Nozick’s comment that “relativism is egalitarian” (19).

¹⁹ Other texts that explore:

i) The notion of determinism:

Honderich, Ted. *A Theory of Determinism: The Mind, Neuroscience, and Life-hopes*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988; and

circularity, whereby a conclusion serves as a premise as well. However, the undecidability that the present discussion posits neither culminates in a perspective which is relativistic, nor involves the indeterminate. As such, the ‘undecidable’ has nothing to do with the cannot-be-determined. Hence, maybe, the ‘undecidable’ connotes the ‘undeterminable’, or ‘yet-to-be-determined’.

The ‘undetermined’ brings to mind, the notion of mimicry. Here, ‘mimicry’ represents the doubleness of a be-coming that ensures the fission and fusion of the many potentialities, which are propelled by the be-come-*ing*. As meaning-making resists the determination of ‘is’, it gravitates towards a restless ‘be-come-*ing*’ to ‘be-come’. So meaning becomes, albeit momentarily. Thus the drafting of apparatuses that are meant for the exemplification of abstract relations between states of inertia and movement is a consequence of thinking about meaning making. The undeterminate effects and affects a relay that is both self-perpetrating and self-perpetuating. Nonetheless, what is the value of an automated diffraction and refraction apart from leaving behind a playful trace of exhilaration—or, anxiety—which always conveys an undetermined text? In other words, how can the undeterminable contribute to ‘knowing’? Before tackling the issue of ‘how to know’, the discussion needs to first gain an insight on the making of meaning. And so, it will have to examine the issue of what constitutes signification. Specifically, what can ‘to signify’ come to mean?

The dissertation intends to assert the following argument. The process of signification is a continual rebirthing to a presence, whereby the yet-to-be-determined—

ii) The notion of indeterminism:

Anscombe, G.E.M. “Causality and Determination”. *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. Ed. John Perry and Michael Bratman. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford UP, 1993. 250-260.

the undeterminable—is determined. Therefore, ‘to signify’ connotes the infinite. This undeterminateness highlights a tendency which the interpretative exhibits. That is, the act of interpretation cannot, via pre-determined categories, be mechanistically deduced. Nevertheless, does categorisation serve no purpose other than to create more and more artificial boundaries? The discussion proceeds to examine this issue by studying the subject of the unconscious and conscious.

In *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), Immanuel Kant responds to the “problematic idealism of Descartes, who declares only one empirical assertion (*assertio*), namely **I am**, to be indubitable” (326) with a theorem that states “**The mere, but empirically determined, consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of objects in space outside me**” (327). In other words, Kant posits that “the consciousness of my existence is at the same time an immediate consciousness of the existence of other things outside me” (327). He cites the example of being aware that his existence is determined in time. According to Kant, time represents the *a priori*, a pure intuition, which is discoverable only within the subjective consciousness. Because the intuitive is transcendental in essence, it neither needs to be validated by the empirical (e.g., Descartes) nor inductive reasoning (e.g., Hume). Kant explains his argument:

[. . .] the representation **I am**, which expresses the consciousness that can accompany all thinking, is that which immediately includes the existence of a subject in itself, but not yet any **cognition** of it, thus not empirical cognition, i.e., experience; for to that there belongs, besides the thought of something existing, intuition, and in this case inner intuition, i.e., time, in regard to which the subject must be determined, for which outer objects

are absolutely requisite, so that inner experience itself is consequently only mediate and possible only through outer experience.

(328)

Thus, according to him, an *a priori* synthesises the interpretations that come about due to the conscious act of perceiving. That is to say, a pre-existing set of (intangible) conditions prescribes ‘a holistic impression’ on an existing (tangible) conscious, thereby constituting ‘I’ as ‘I’. Thus, consciousness is the channel via which unconsciousness is reasoned out. Though the intention is to make sense of the ‘intangible’—in this case, the unconscious—Kant asserts that, regardless of the approach, the actual dynamics of this unobservable/unknowable can never be stated. At best, ‘the ways of knowing’ (i.e., the methodologies devised to gain knowledge) can only serve as artificial means for interpreting the phenomena. Although Kant draws up a boundary between the ‘knowable’ and ‘unknowable’, it is obvious that one qualification sustains the other—for without one, there will be no other. In view of their intimate correlation, perhaps, a pair of binary opposites is really a unit in itself? Perhaps, “Everything that happens is hypothetically necessary; that is a principle that subjects alteration in the world to a law, i.e., a rule of necessary existence, without which not even nature itself would obtain. Hence the proposition ‘Nothing happens through a mere accident’ [. . .] (Kant 329).

The above discussion appears to foreground a connection between a ‘singular’ and the ‘plural’. In fact, a single some thing appears to be made up of a plural of some things. Similarly, the open-endedness of that which makes meaning is consolidated through a force that unites. For instance, though markers belonging to a specific idiom have the potential to take on more and more interpretations, collectively, they form a

peculiar locus of meaning(s). This, in turn, results in the expansion and convergence of greater and wider unit/ies within a unity itself. And, the fruition of unit/ies is sanctioned by a 'virtual-ness'. So, the continuity of this 'virtuality' is granted freedom to unfold in its own excesses. By the constitution of a no-thing, the 'virtual' is a differentiation of the same. That is, a 'self' which repeats from itself, through itself, within itself.

Subsequently, the no-thing is characterised by the intangibility of the tangible. And this 'absence' maintains the mode of self-sufficiency within which signification operates. Of course, this does not imply that markers are absent of signification. For instance, 't₂' is interpretable as 't₂' because the qualifying 'other', such as 't₃, t₄, t₅ . . . t_∞', negates, as well as, defines it. As the finite embraces the infinite by determining 'what is' through 'what is not', the singularity of an ever-returning repetition unfolds within a folding. The infinite is a successive demonstration of the 'not-being-there': No-thingness.

The notion of the 'no-thing' is well studied by many eminent philosophers. Although their philosophical trajectories are marked by extensive differences, Spinoza and Hegel theorise that every existence belongs to some kind of universality and 'ceaselessness'. Moreover, just as the marker 't₂' is qualified by a host of 'other's', including t₃, t₄, t₅ . . . , the infinite is correlated with at least one 'other', the finite. Consequently, the finite needs to prevail when inquiring into the infinite because it is the mode by which the immeasurable infinitude corresponds. And so, the infinitude of infinity sees to the intelligible perpetuation of 't' (e.g., in the realm of virtual- time and space) and the finitude of the finite sees to the sensible manifestation of 't' (e.g., in the realm of actual- time and space).

For instance, the making of ‘t’ is attributed to a time and space within the context of an absent time and space—the immanently incorporeal. An orientation that is imbued in ‘materiality’, it departs from the Platonic world of ideas, which distinguishes between the sensible and intelligible. The co-relation of meaning making/signification to materiality is an attempt to think of the ‘virtual’ as an ‘actual’ process. So, though the incorporeal sustains an infinite temporality, the immanent attests to its momentary actualising. As such, the passing on of ‘t’ being ‘t’ in a ‘real’, ‘physical’ and ‘observable’ sense serves as a guideline for all the possible passings of all ‘ts’ to come.

Fundamentally, the dissertation studies the problematics encircling meaning-making in context with some ‘thing’. This ‘thing’ can be thought of as being ‘material’ in essence. Besides, this materiality facilitates the causal-like unfolding of the yet-to-be-determined, like ‘t₂’, ‘t₃’, ‘t₄’ . . . t_∞. With particular reference to theses belonging to Nietzsche, Bergson and Deleuze, the paper sets out to put forward a thesis of (pure) affirmation. Nevertheless, this logic of withinness is not an end in itself. Rather, it is yet another way of thinking about, as well connecting different relations with-in the iterability of a singular plural: —*ing*.

Some final words are needed before closing this introduction. The two main components, Section One—*Of Interpretation* and Section Two—*Interpretations*, of the dissertation are not written in a sequential order. Section two, which consists of an interpretation of Deleuze reading Proust, an interpretation of time and an interpretation of space, was written first when I tried to deploy Deleuze and the notion of time and the concept of space as resources for thinking about the critical trajectories, methods and

frames of inquiry related to hermeneutics. The purpose of this necessary detour is to rethink the correlation between meaning-making and interpretation.

Section One—*Of Interpretation*, which opens the dissertation proper, is written in a sequential order. This first section is comprised of a brief address, followed by three chapters: first, *Thinking about the Nature of Perception*; second, *Thinking about the Nature of Mental Images*; and third, *Thinking about the Nature of Meaning-making*. As a whole, Section One elaborates on the interrelations between ‘subject’ (i.e., the nature of perceiving), ‘object’ (i.e., the nature of constructing mental images) and ‘activity of interpreting meaning’ (i.e., the nature of making meaning). The affinity between subject, object and interpretation will be examined from a perspective that associates representation with no-thingness. The focus of Section One is to deliver a set of fundamentals that will help in the establishment of a logic of interpretation. Although the chapters of the first section unfold sequentially, this order may come across as deliberately ‘disordered’ or ‘fragmented’. Hence, to a certain extent, in spite of the intended ‘order’, Chapters One, Two and Three can be read in any sequence.

Section Two—*Interpretations* is based on reviews of related theoretical considerations and literary works. The discussion will attempt to interpret theories and materials that inform interpretation. As such, techniques of interpretation are applied to the specific texts, like Deleuze’s *Proust and Signs* (1972), the notion of time and the concept of space. The purpose for this inclusion is two-fold. First, to provide a general overview of research that pertains to the topic of interpretation and second, to highlight some of the issues which remain problematic presently. As mentioned above, all in all, the material that is found in Section Two serves as groundwork for the ‘main’ ideas that

are presented in Section One. Therefore, inevitably, there are some repetitions between Sections One and Two.

With a noticeable degree of naiveté, connections are pieced together in hope of delivering a perspective on how thinking is the (absent) addresser, addressee and addressed all at once. The dissertation asks simple questions in relation to the problems it wishes to tackle and revisits the basics of its topic time and again. As such, instead of generating interpretations of works that are being offered by specific theorists, the discussion intends to study the fundamental issues that are connected to the subject of meaning making. This is to say, the dissertation looks to explicate the problematics as well as concepts that are associated with the subject of interpretation. It is intentional that this exposition seeks to deliver a thesis that is free from any single perspective or origin. This is because central to the proposition it wishes to assert is the notion of ‘becoming’ rather than ‘being’. Hence, though an inquiry is initiated, perhaps, nothing resembling an answer or solution is offered. Meaning-making, in the present study, is a self-reflexive discourse: that is, as a fully-realised and self-contained entity, what the interpretative is constituted of and how it stands in relation to all other ‘things’.

In this dissertation, the study of hermeneutics for itself leads to the following speculation. The act of interpretation tends to exhibit characteristics that are typical of something which is perpetually in the process of creating some things. These characteristics include slipperiness, tentativeness and inventiveness. As a consequence, an interpretation is always layered with a multiple of other interpretations. At the heart, then, of the hermeneutic nexus is differment and deferment not essence. Once again, in a metaphoric sense, indeed, there is no escape from Cypher’s reign.

SECTION ONE—*Of Interpretation*

Before embarking on any critical or theoretical formulation, the nature and the object of the current project must first be restated. One of the dissertation's main aims is to describe the means for pursuing an understanding and perception of interpretation in relation to the ontological context of the 'absent'. Though this objective is central to the thesis, it is in no way the entire project. Ultimately, the purpose of establishing a notion of 'the lacking' is to facilitate an analysis of the constitutions that may become of interpretation. The hypothesis wants to foreground the perennial birthing of a non-presence. That is, a 'no-thing-ness' which is consequential of reading, processing and responding to a phenomenon.

Clearly, the investigation assumes that there is a 'nature' to speak about when inquiring into the interpretative. In context of this dissertation, this 'presentness' refers to the 'being' of interpretation. Nevertheless, how can the making of meaning be thought of in a unitary sense, an 'a', when its existence, as delineated in this paper, is dependent on a surplus, which results from continual movement and change? Perhaps the overabundance of this singularness can be described as "an errant and even 'delirious' distribution, in which things are deployed across the entire extensity of a univocal and undistributed [b]eing. It is not a matter of being which is distributed according to the requirements of representation, but of all things being divided up within being in the univocity of simple presence (the One—All)" (Deleuze, *Difference* 46). Here, the notion of "the One—All" is interpreted to be a multiplicity of multiplicities. For instance, a garden is made up of various elements, including flora and fauna. While it is possible to make out a list of the

things that contribute to the characterisation of ‘garden’, there is no way of determining what constitutes ‘g-a-r-d-e-n’ exactly. This is because, in order *to* signify, ‘garden’, like all other symbols, must be a marker for the yet-to-be-determined.

The process of meaning making establishes the condition that meaning is ‘to-be-made’. Because meaning ‘can be made’, the interpretation of signs is not based on a one-on-one relationship between a sign and its referent. For instance, ‘garden’ can, at the same time, refer to ‘flora’, as well as ‘fauna’ and ‘living organisms’. Therefore, ‘garden’ is a sign that may be employed to denote a host of possible meanings. And, signs, such as ‘garden’, ‘gardens’ and ‘gardenia’, bear separate sets of meanings because they signify through a ‘difference’. That is, a sign means something as it differs from other signs, which, in turn, differ from yet other signs. Thus, the meaning(s) that a sign refers to is constituted by a chain of differentiations. Accordingly, this sequence sees to the connection between signs and signs, whereby a sign is an independent entity as much as it is dependent on other entities²⁰. As a sign is defined through its difference from other signs, the meaning(s) that it can be made to signify constantly shifts, inter-relates and circulates. Subsequently, the multiple-ness of a sign is not a many-fold confluence of something that is merely unified. Instead, it is a singular diversity that exists *in* itself and is conceived of *through* itself. So, every signification is connected to and is connected through other significations. For instance, different significations express what the sign ‘g-a-r-d-e-n’ may come to mean; namely, a tapestry of flora, fauna and other living organisms. Because the singularity of a multiplicity cannot be reduced to any one ‘thing’,

²⁰ Further down, the thesis argues that the connection between signs and signs is actually marked by a ‘withnessness’. i.e., the re-connection and re-constitution within signs and signs.

the process ‘*of interpretation*’ must be conceived as a potential that produces producing relations. In short, it is a be-coming that cannot become.

In context of the current argument, it is evident that difference, deference, repetition, and becoming characterise the (to-be) producibility of interpretation. As a matter of fact, the steadfast resistance against that which ‘becomes’ points to a reliance on an inclusive no-thingness. This is to say the study *of interpretation* rests ‘within-itself’. Of course, as a key concept, interpretation-in-itself compels the following two questions. Is the notion of in-itself ‘fundamental’ since its innerness sanctions the interpretable? If this is indeed the case, can the dynamism of an ‘other(-)ing’ come to mean anything then? These two issues which concern ‘*of interpretation*’ point to a correlation between be-ing, the continuity of possible existent-s, and be-*ing*, the continuing of possible existence. The present argument postulates that the condition ‘to be’ affects the be-ing of be-*ing*. Subsequently, the material in this dissertation looks to address these issues by examining the ‘being’ of the ‘within’. That is, since the be-come-ing virtually becomes without actually becoming, the passing of such a transition is immanent. Therefore, immanence designates a relation between some ‘thing’, in this case, the ‘interpretative’, and the interiority of the ‘other’, which will be explained in the course of this present discussion.

Hence, Section One, *Of Interpretation*, will be an inspection of how the interpretative relates, orders and represents creatively. The opening paragraphs of this section suggest that the continuity of the interpretable is underscored by a manifestation of an ‘itself’ that can never be realised. Although interpretation-in-itself is not reducible to ‘a context’, the forces that help to produce its creation involve a specific orientation, or

milieu. Thus, the intention here is to consider the subject in relation to the question, “How does thought correspond to the construction of a meaning?” In order to respond to this question, the discussion will study three concepts: perception, thought and interpretation. In short, how does ‘perception’ initiate a ‘thought’, which will contribute to an ‘interpretation’?

As stated in the first paragraph of this section, the discussion posits that ‘*of interpretation*’ is closely linked with the absent. And, the description of this affiliation will be carried out in the three chapters to come. Namely: *Thinking about the Nature of Perception*; *Thinking about the Nature of Mental Images*; and *Thinking about the Nature of Meaning-making*. The discussion views that the analysis and construction of a ‘perception’, a ‘mental image’ and a ‘meaning’ rest upon a ‘non-presence’, or, more decidedly, a ‘no-thing’.

The explication of complications involving perceiving, thinking, meaning-making and no-thing finds an affinity with the theories of Nietzsche, Bergson and Deleuze. The discussion deems their self-styled discourse, which couples a renewed logic of sense with multiplicity, as laying the foundation for considering the ‘yet-to-be-thought’. Hence, the present (re)interpretation of Nietzsche, Bergson and Deleuze’s work, which is necessarily situated, extrapolates three things. First, thought exists within a ‘gap’. That is, the difference which relates the relationship between a subject and an object. Second, attention is being paid to events that are in the making. Third, the subject is a construct of both difference and event. In order to see how these assumptions contribute to the assertions that this dissertation makes, Chapter One will address the question, ‘How do difference, object and subject cohere?’

Chapter One: *Thinking about the Nature of Perception*

Thinking about the Nature of Perception considers the connection between an object and a subject's perception of it. By means of studying the phenomenon as it appears to its subjects, interpretation, an important activity central to existence and knowledge, is considered. The study of how a thing is perceived and how it is interpreted concerns the uncovering of constitutions, connections and significances that correlate perceiving with understanding. Because perception accompanies a subject's interpretation of his/her surroundings, this process of 'reading' and 'understanding' yields a way of exploring how the former, in turn, is the phenomenon. In other words, the subject is not simply an 'end-product' which is constituted by the social fabric. S/he plays an active role in determining that constitution as well.

For a substantial period of time, philosophers and theorists have raised questions concerned with the subject of perception. These include 'Is perception associated with matter?' 'How is perception related with the senses?' and 'How does matter correlate with sense?' For instance, the knowledge that 'any carnivorous mammals of the Felidae family' are called a 'cat' requires the sensibility of a mind. But can 'matter', like 'cat', be posited as 'material' when its assumption is made based on an 'ontological' substance, like the 'mind'? This foregrounds an ambiguity. Is matter real/material, or can it be considered as abstract/ontological? Besides, if the 'mind' intervenes in the interpretation of 'matter', should other components belonging to the same category not have the same level of influence as well? (e.g., 'soul' and 'spirit')? In context of this discussion,

explanations that offer perspectives on ‘how the world *is*’ serve little purpose. This is because where perception ‘arises from’ remains debatable

Since the present discussion does not intend to decipher what constitutes ‘is’, phenomenological descriptions, including ‘undeniable knowledge’ and ‘experience in itself’, play a limited role in this discussion. Thus, at this juncture, it is necessary to state that the premise asserted here does not result from referencing theses that aim to explicate ‘things in themselves’. However, the notion that consciousness is always conscious of something remains significant. After all, intentional consciousness predicates how knowledge is constituted. Moreover, bearing in mind how a ‘gap’ readily keeps the ‘to-be-perceived’ from becoming ‘the-perceived’, it is a case whereby the intentionality of consciousness is in constant denial of itself. And if this is indeed one of the conditions for knowing, a description that originally privileges the phenomenological principle is converted into one that rallies behind epistemological investigations (i.e., the (un)determining of the knowable within the (un)knowable).

This chapter will study the nature of perception in three sub-sections. Namely, ‘The Method’, ‘The Constituents’ and ‘A Theory of Perception’. Altogether, these sub-sections take into consideration how a ‘gap’ acts as an ‘invisible force’, which governs the perceptibility of the perceptible. First, the method for thinking about perception is considered. Second, the constituents that make up the method are delineated. Third, a theory of perception, which draws on the findings concerning its method and constituents, will be delivered. Conclusively, this theory of perception proposes the (non)presence of a presentable perception. Though reminiscent of Bergson’s theory of

pure perception, the material ahead looks to extend the familiar by making an observation on the no-thingness of the ‘no-thing’.

The Method

By now, it should be apparent that conditions and determinants of perception resist delineation. Consequently, questions relating to the features of perception, such as ‘what exists’, ‘what are its constituents’ and ‘what enables an interpretation of it’, do not yield answers easily. After all, how is it possible to observe the unobservable and to lay the conditions of the unconditioned? The marginal headway made since Pre-Socratic days attests to the difficulty posed by the issues mentioned above. Instead of clarifying and organising knowledge, methodology after methodology is met with objections because there is no consensus for verifying the way to know. In order to validate this assertion, it is necessary to take a brief look at two hypotheses that have been drawn up for the purpose of determining the nature, possibility and scope of knowledge (i.e., epistemology).

According to Adam Morton’s guide to the theory of knowledge, the study of epistemology yields two extreme views: “radical externalism” versus “deep scepticism” (2). He says,

So there are three central questions that the theory of knowledge tries to answer.

What qualities should our beliefs have?

What qualities do our actual present beliefs have?

What qualities could our beliefs have?

(Morton 9-10)

In order to examine the various possible answers to these three questions, Morton considers two concepts, 'externalism' and 'scepticism'. He explains that

The first would be extreme error-avoidance, avoiding at all costs acquiring any false beliefs at any stage of trying to understand the world. The other would be the choice that contrasts most dramatically with this, extreme ignorance-avoidance, and avoiding at all costs having a shortage of the beliefs [. . .] The extreme error-avoider would argue that if we build our beliefs up carefully, avoiding getting any false ones, we will eventually get true and useful beliefs on any topic we investigate. And the extreme ignorance-avoider would argue that beliefs that contradict the evidence are not going to be useful, so that in trying for useful beliefs we will end up with beliefs that are as near to true [. . .].

(Morton 77)

In any case, regardless of whether a theory seeks to 'avoid error' or to 'avoid ignorance', the aim is to explain why a 'process' may result in the acquisition of reliable knowledge. Further, both the error-avoider and the ignorance-avoider wish to determine *the way* in which information can be processed and communicated so as to establish true knowledge. For instance, in order to guard against having false beliefs, the error-avoider proceeds to separate fact from fiction by gathering knowledge that can be justified via reasoning and/or an assembly of evidence. And, in order to be certain that valid reasons are given for all beliefs, the ignorance-avoider strives to ensure that justifications are as true as they can be.

Although classification, such as the two categories mentioned above, is an undertaking that renders merits, it remains inadequate when explaining how knowledge comes about²¹. To a large extent, this shortcoming is the result of a problem which is the tendency for categories to gravitate towards methods that are reductive in essence. This is to say, the desire to locate the ‘core’ that constitutes knowledge has led to an impasse. A system of classification demarcates categories which are used to evaluate the similarities and differences between the one category and another. Since a category is like a template of some kind, it is presumed to be constant and unchanging even when fresh evidence is discovered and new theories are to be considered. Because all possibilities are being categorised as one thing or another, the act of classification becomes dogmatic, restrictive and reductive. For instance, the error-avoider believes that empirical evidence alone, such as the perceivable, touchable and audible, serves as proof of truth. But this approach does not take into account that certain knowledge cannot be gathered ‘externally’. Likewise, the ignorance-avoider believes that true knowledge is gained by discovering exactly how every belief is supported by the available evidence. However, can all beliefs be supported by evidence? And is it not possible that false beliefs become true when new evidence is discovered?

Fraught by debatable reasoning and summations, such as those mentioned above, the problematics that involve knowing cannot be resolved through a system that seeks to classify. Though the act of classification offers a perspective as well as produces positive

²¹ Classification foregrounds the relationship between a category and other categories. Also, the system situates categories within their respective homogenised context and production, which enables specific interpretation. However, classification is ultimately an abstract conception. Because a category is mapped out based on conditions that are artificially drawn up by those who subscribe to it, the process of classification is neither objective, nor neutral.

connections, the process of drawing up demarcations ends up raising substantial discontent. Perhaps, then, the problem of thinking about the nature of interpretation requires reengineering.

Realistically speaking, it is hardly possible to erase knowledge that has been accepted as ‘known’. However, to pinpoint the problem(s) concerning perception, a suspension of disbelief is required. For instance, in the opening lines of *Matter and Memory* (1988), Bergson rallies the reader to slip into temporary amnesia. He says, “We are going to feign for an instant that we know nothing of the theories of matter and of the theories of spirit, nothing of the discussions concerning the reality or ideality of the external world” (Bergson, *Matter* 17). The strategy of ‘feigning’ is nothing new especially after Descartes had deployed it to raise radical doubts about the existence of everything external by conjuring the malicious all-mighty demon. Similarly, the fiction called for in this discussion is meant to initiate a cross-examination of widely-accepted methods and reasoning. But, what purpose does this course of action serve?

As a point of departure, feigning ignorance pares down “the habits formed in action [...] the sphere of speculation, where they create fictitious problems, and that [thinking about the nature of perception] must begin by dispersing this artificial obscurity” (Bergson, *Matter* 16). Nevertheless, this process of ‘returning to the basics’, which reveals the core(s), is not yet another triumph of methodological reductionism. In line with subjects that find affinity with the notion, ‘small is beautiful’ (e.g., physics and biology) the objective here is to put forward explanations that are simple and art-less. Collectively, these attributes see to the development of a methodology similar to micro-reductionism. In a strategy that readdresses basics as micro-entities, the primary building

blocks of perception are, thereby, laid. Moreover, these fundamentals of perception contribute to an understanding of how a subject extracts and uses the information which the environment ‘extends’. Thus, thinking about the nature of perception must commence from and constantly return to these bearers.

The liberation of a thesis from layers of “artificial obscurity” urges a return to immediacy—the direct²². Because the immediate does not require the invention of any intermediary, such as a subject, memory and causality, the taking place of that which is ‘taking place’ becomes an important event in itself. That is, the very instantaneity of intrinsic interactions happening within the dynamics of ‘something taking place’ leads to a production of the producing. As a whole, the occurrence is an outcome of confluent forces that aggregate to become an event. This ‘occurring’, which is made up of a synthesis of events, is an actualisation that demonstrates the affecting as opposed to the effecting.

An example helps to illustrate the point mentioned above. For instance, water solidifying into ice during winter is a momentary occurrence due to the co-incidence of metrological conditions, such as passing weather patterns, temperature changes and chemical reactions. Therefore, it is inapt to say that during winter ‘water becomes ice’ because it will imply that there is a fundamental change in the components that make up water. Instead, it may be more appropriate to think of the transition as ‘water is solidifying’ because the semantics of the statement encapsulate an actualising of the event’s dynamic state (i.e., the process can be recast as an uninflected verb form that is being put into action). The phrase, ‘to solidify’, being free from plausible limitations,

²² Ref., Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, pp. 137.

signals the individuation of water and solid-ness, whilst capturing the dynamism of the event's happening. In spite of the intra- and inter- relationship between 'water' and ice', the distinction of element from element, occurrence from occurrence and event from event marks a differentiation that maintains the integrity of entities, bodies, or states. Nevertheless, if the expressed is not a resemblance of the process that expresses it, how is the immediate to be conceived?

The directness of immediacy is delivered on two levels. Reminiscent of the sense and reference distinction first made by the Stoics, the two equal planes described here construct a difference that puts sense and sensibility 'on par' in spite of the dichotomy. As such, the immediacy of sensibility is both constituted by, as well as, divided from sense. Furthermore, the congruency between the two planes can be understood as a mingling of the tangible with the intangible. What Deleuze calls the "frolie" (*Logic* 5) on a surface of occurrences, the material and the incorporeal become one in a morphing that ultimately composes 'entirety'. The following example illustrates this event of sense-ability. 'The tide is ebbing' expresses an inherent sense within the observation. That is, regardless of how many times the tide 'has ebbed', the sense of 'The tide is ebbing' remains inexhaustible. In other words, the observed can be reduced neither to a specific state, nor an infinite series of specific states owing to the occurrence (i.e., the ebbing of tide). Thus, while the immediateness of an occurrence possesses the temporality of 'present', the incorporeality guarantees its escape from the presence of a present. This is to say, the tide has always ebbed and has yet to ebb. As such, the incorporeal effect of 'ebbing' can never manifest completely.

A recapitulation of the above content directs the argument towards a (re)‘turn’. And so, the notion of immediacy will re-examine as well as revise the conventions that have been accepted as ‘common sense’. By reinstating and reinventing the problems encircling the nature of interpretation, the prospective viewpoints will bear the hallmarks of ‘free-play’. That is, a process of creative transformations where the returning passes on again and again as it morphs into differing states. To demonstrate what this (pseudo)freedom means to the present endeavour, the discussion, hereby, defines the problem of perception as one that rests in ‘itself’. This assertion reinforces the proposition that the issue at hand is one that relates to itself, and to itself alone.

Theoretically speaking, the next step should involve outlining an argument that would lead to a perspective of perception. However, this will throw the discussion off the intended course since it has not put forward a thesis concerning its make-up. Therefore, the sub-section following this approximates the constituents of perception. It is an approach which may eventually lead to a hypothesis that finds an affinity with ‘differentiality’. A three-part differentiation that presents a fixation and delimitation of the perceivable altogether, it represents a ‘whole’ which continually opens up new productions and connections, as opposed to bringing closure and completion. What follows then is an attempt to deal with the question, ‘How does perception relate to that which makes it?’.

The Constituents

What is perception? To a great extent, it is a subject’s interpretation of his/her surroundings. S/he churns out an account of ‘what is happening’ by making sense of

information that is ingested, sieved and transmitted by the five main sensory organs. Herein lies the problem of perception. Is perception concerned with a thing, which is perceived by a mediator like a subject, or a fact, which deems some thing as 'true'?

If perception is about things, then, generally speaking, the condition is 'non-epistemic'. This means that x is deemed ' x ' without the need of verification. For instance, statements such as 'A cat is resting on the mat' and 'An eclipse has the sun hidden' do not require identification. Other 'better' instances include 'Aliens live on Mars' and 'Poltergeists exist'. In these examples, there is no need to 'know for sure' if a cat is sitting on a mat, an eclipse shadows the sun, there are aliens on the planet Mars, or poltergeists really exist.

But if perception is about facts, then, the condition is 'epistemic'. Therefore, x cannot be determined to be ' x ' without some sort of verification. So, evidence is needed to affirm that cats can rest on mats, the sun can be eclipsed, and Martians and poltergeists exist. Nevertheless, perception's role is not limited to providing its subject with knowledge about the environment. Observations suggesting possibilities, such as those associated with the mannerisms of a cat, the course taken by an eclipse, the existence of aliens and poltergeists, may merely be deductions made based on subject-relevant information that is widely accepted, and/or a subjective whim. As such, the discussion notes that there must be more to perception apart from ordinary seeing. In other words, interpreting meaning spans beyond the given information of what a thing is or is like. This assumption draws attention to the possibility that the perception of a perceived may just be about perceptual experience (in) itself.

To put it simplistically, perception is comprised of two main aspects. They are the ‘physiological’ and ‘psychological’. While much could be said about what happens within the body of a subject once data is being picked up via an array of stimuli, and equally much could be written about the mechanisms that participate to compute the experience, the aim here is to study perception as an ‘intention’. This is to say, the exercise sets out to delineate the various components for thinking about perception and see how they piece together—or at least contribute to an understanding of the issues presently at stake.

The creation of every perception involves a thing/event, a subject and a discourse. To gain an understanding of how these constituents all fit in, a detailed study follows. Because an interaction is often defined in terms of an exchange between a thing/event and a subject, the discussion assumes that a certain sense of ‘extension’ is at work. By virtue of this extensionality, which refers to an external some thing, or a set of things, objectivity is inferred. Thus, the sustenance of a thing/event is independent of a subject’s perception and a discourse’s interpretation of it. And, the ‘object’ functions within an arena that is governed by its own set of rules and regulations. All in all, a thing/event just exists—it ‘is’. Notwithstanding its independence, the objectification of a thing/event weighs heavily as a necessary complement to both subject and discourse. As a matter of fact, the initiation of a discourse, via the subject, is dependent on the extension that a thing/event yields. Because the relationship between thing/event, subject and discourse is legitimised by extensionality and objectivity, the act of perceiving could be read as an aftermath of an *auto nomos* modification (i.e., an engagement with ‘the pure’). Hence, the

first hypothesis of perception is that perceptual discourse itself is essentially trans-temporal, trans-spatial and trans-political. That is, an expression of pure perception²³.

The notion of pure perception recalls the doctrine of ‘idealism’. This is especially so because ‘pure perception’ like ‘ideality’ describes a disposition towards the intangible as well as the qualitative. As such, it may be difficult to delineate, or determine what ‘pure perception’ can come to mean. But, consider this proposition: Pure perception stands to a thing/event as a part to a whole. No doubt many counter-arguments crop up, if this is to be considered valid. How is it possible for pure perception to be part of a ‘real’ thing/event and, at the same time, also be part of a ‘not-real’ that exists only in theory? Also, if the discourse that emerges out of interrelating thing/event and subject only differs in terms of technicalities, why does it come across as somewhat ‘less real’? What is it that links perception to a(p)-perception? How does (pure) perception correlate with what it is perceptive of?

Maybe an illustration will prove helpful. Imagine an air-tight cylinder filled with a mass of tiny white Styrofoam balls moving about in frenzy. Each Styrofoam ball co-exists indifferently with all others, *ceteris paribus*. However, due to some unforeseen influence, a group of Styrofoam balls begins to behave differently; banding together, these ‘deviant’ Styrofoam balls move in random rhythms. Unavoidably, the sudden spontaneity that overcomes this group impacts the behavioural patterns of the ‘normal’ ones. Perhaps, the other normal Styrofoam balls will react by gathering together, initiating their own course, or simply be pushed around by whatever hits them.

Whichever the case, as a whole, the dynamics that bind the mass of Styrofoam balls

²³ Bergson mentions “pure perception” in *Matter and Memory* (Chap. 4). However, he sees pure perception as an experience of matter, whilst the discussion at hand does not.

within the cylinder has been altered. That is, whilst the deviant Styrofoam balls gather to make up a 'deviant' rhythm, the rest gather to make up an alternative ('normal') rhythm.

Upon transposing the Styrofoam ball anecdote to the subject of pure perception, it is at once observed that a thing/event 'in itself' lacks differentiability. This non-differentiability points to the 'indiscernible', 'indifferent' and 'out there'. With a subject's intervention, a thing/event 'comes to life', or 'takes on a life' because s/he sees and reads what it could come to mean. And so, this differentiability creates the 'discernible', 'different' and 'within'. Therefore, the dynamical exchange between a thing/event and a subject results in a spontaneity that causes the perceivability of a perception (i.e., the perceivable). Moreover, because a particular perceivable correlates with all other perceivables in a differentiability, it is necessarily biased. Since perceiveables can never be engaged with in their entirety, a perceivable, being determined as an 'is', is perpetually less than itself. This conjecture is supported by two reasons. First, a 'something' maintains the gap between all possible perceivables; it keeps the perceivable from becoming perceived. Second, perceivability hinges upon a subject's ability to see and read; the limitations that accompany this ability translate into an inexhaustibility of that which can be perceived (i.e., the perceivability of a thing/event). And so, although the subject enables a representation/perception, s/he is not privileged. Rather, the subject, being part of a spontaneous flux of perceivables, is in turn inscribed as a 'subject'.

Up till now, obscurity continues to blur the explication of pure perception. Though more needs to be said about the subject before making any firm conjecture, a reflection of the discussion thus far seem to suggest pro-monistic tendencies. Basically, the above paragraphs give the impression that the perceiving of a perception is

entrenched in an entity or, colloquially speaking, some kind of ‘stuff’. This is especially so when the nature of ‘pure perception’ comes across as neither physical, nor metaphysical. Nonetheless, if the discussion seems to inadvertently lean towards the monistic, a single principle that binds all perceivables together, it, hereby, takes quick steps to remedy further potential misunderstandings.

If a thing/event’s ‘nature’ maintains its ‘invisibility’, its state could be deemed as objective. When mediated by a subject, a thing/event becomes perceivable. So, is a thing/event Janus-faced? Consider this proposition: Whilst the ‘nature’ belonging to a thing/event maintains its integrity as ‘*the* nature’, this very same primary condition takes on a secondary variable when a subject, owing to the mechanics of interpretation, composes and outlines a ‘perception’ of it. Therefore, the invisible translates as ‘visible’, the unperceivable translates as ‘perceivable’ and pure perception translates as ‘perception’. As such, central to this discussion is a sense of double-ness rather than the reduction of everything to a single governing principle (i.e., monism).

The above statement concerning the doubleness of a thing/event needs further addressing. First and foremost, double-ness does not construe ‘duality’ or ‘double aspect’. The spontaneity professed by the perceiving of the perceivables carries with it a certain sense of ‘abstraction’. This ‘missing something’ is an attribution of the ‘undetermined’ or ‘yet-to-be-determined’. As a consequence, the second hypothesis of perception draws attention to an endgame that anticipates differential interactions. Simply put, pure perception expresses the differentiation, variation and multiplication of perceptions (with)in a single-ness. The commitment to the pureness of perception cancels out the possibility of any thing being ‘outside’. So, every perception that comes out from

‘within’ is really an (re)assertion of ‘itself’. Therefore, the second hypothesis of perception conceives that a ‘multiplicity of perception’ proceeds from the primacy of pure perception.

Before the discussion proceeds to outline the last differentiation, it will be useful to revisit the material presented up till here. Generally, the process of thinking about perception has manoeuvred this discussion towards the notion of ‘utopianism’²⁴. That is to say, the thesis rests on re-connecting and re-distributing the dynamics between references and their accepted meanings. Without wanting to repeat too much, overall, the (re)arrangement conflates the fundamental with experimental, the one with many, and the pure with mixed. To what end does this fusion serve? In order to highlight a reason in support of this strategy, the discussion turns to Bergson.

In *The Creative Mind* (1946)²⁵, Bergson makes a case for the metaphysics of change and substance by deploying an illustration which involves men, melodies and cricket balls. He supposes that regardless of whether ‘men’, ‘cricket balls’ or ‘melodies’ admit changes that are perceivable, their progression amounts to an evolution. In each event of (ever) realisation, instantaneous becoming is secondary to the primacy of be-

²⁴ Deleuze and Guattari deploys the concept of ‘utopia’ in *What is Philosophy?* (1994). According to them, ‘utopia’ represents the connection of an absolute plane of immanence with a specific context that also functions through immanence (Deleuze and Guattari, *Philosophy?* 98). Thus, “Utopia does not split from infinite movement: etymologically it stands for absolute deterritorialisation [. . . it] refers not only to nowhere but also to now-here” (99-100). So, ‘utopia’ points to the perpetual creating of new concepts because there is no ‘The Concept’ to speak of. Subsequently, ‘utopianism’ is about engaging with different ways of existing and becoming.

²⁵ This dissertation refers to the 1968, Greenwood Press edition.

coming. To facilitate the discussion, ‘men’ and ‘melodies’ are deployed in the following example²⁶.

For instance, when Scott Weiland performs an acoustic rendition of *Plush* on a guitar, does the melody exist? Sure, Weiland exists as the person delivering the song. But unlike Weiland, the song lacks ‘flesh and blood’ and so is not ‘real’. Certainly, it is easy to see the chain of changes that come together to form his delivery of *Plush*: the strumming fingers, the vibrating larynx and the moving lips. However, it is harder to pinpoint the constitution of *Plush*, although it could be thought of as a melody of varying sounds. Perhaps, the best way to explain qualitative changes is through the making of comparisons. *Plush*’s melody is comparable to Weiland’s anatomy: basic structures that act as determinants—musical notes dictate the melody and physical attributes combine to deliver a performance. *Plush*’s sound is comparable to Weiland’s rendition: the audible is varied, indeterminant and ‘contentless’—the sound is an element that does not really exist and the rendition is just one of the many possible versions. Overall, sound, like a rendition of *Plush*, cannot exist all-at-once because being somewhat structure-less, it is never a ‘complete’ entity. It is crucial to realise that this incompleteness does not merely owe itself to the many possible (in fact, infinite) interpretations of the stated notes and bars. Rather, this becoming suggests the immanent workings of a continual variation. The assertion refers to a chain of sounds/continuants that varies in the ‘pure’ sense.

If the discussion of ‘men’ and ‘melodies’ is extended beyond the current context of Weiland, performance, melody and sound, a broader inquiry concerning change, the

²⁶ The discussion chooses to put ‘men’ and ‘melodies’ side by side, and to exclude ‘cricket balls’ because it is easier to talk about their momentum of change.

event of change and the continuant of change is set into motion. Incidentally, this interest in change, event and continuant leads the discussion back to the spontaneity of an experience, which asserts a repeated differentiability of differences. The concept of a continuing differencing and deferencing is represented by: $\uparrow \frac{\text{deference}}{\text{difference}}$.

Saussure posits that a sign is composed of two elements: the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the 'form' that a sign takes, while the signified is the concept which is being represented. Since a sign is the product of a particular signifier referencing a particular signified, something must point to something. For instance, uttering the word 'dog' will conjure an image of a canine. Therefore, a signified and a signifier are 'united', and so a sign possesses intrinsic meaning. Although Saussure recognises the arbitrariness between a sign and its associated meaning, he continues to assert that, owing to the presence of structures and conventions, the link between these two elements is fixed. Nevertheless, if there is no natural connection between the signified and the signifier, the correlation between the two cannot be 'already present'.

Central to the idea of signification is that the interpretable/meaning occurs through difference. As signification is generated by difference, which co-relates signs that exist within a signifying system, it is marked by heterogeneity. That is, the over-determination of a sign. Furthermore, this surplus, which is the result of a repeating differentiation, points to a creation that deflects, shifts and restructures the interpretable/meaning: the undetermined. Hence, the intra-changeability of the infinite differentiability, $\uparrow \frac{\text{deference}}{\text{difference}}$, and the repeating deferentiality, $\uparrow \frac{\text{difference}}{\text{deference}}$, is determined by a singular (non)presence that necessitates the representation of something to be

something. So, an interpretable/meaning is perpetually a re-placement of another interpretable/meaning. This undetermineness is the predicate for an absence that presents itself as deference/difference || difference/deference.

The concept $\uparrow \frac{\text{difference}}{\text{deference}}$ appears to be an interpretation of Deleuze and Derrida; it seems to resemble notions, including ‘difference’ ‘deference’ and ‘repetition’, which are often associated with the both of them. Certainly, $\uparrow \frac{\text{difference}}{\text{deference}}$ belongs to the field of significations which Deleuze and Derrida (and others, like Nietzsche and Heidegger) have helped to produced. Nevertheless, should this dissertation be an examination of issues similar to those which concerned Deleuze and Derrida, it approaches them differently.

In the case of the discussion at hand, $\uparrow \frac{\text{difference}}{\text{deference}}$ is located within the presence of a present absent. That is, the differencing and deferencing inter- and intra- relate through itself; it is a function that exists within the functioning of function itself. Hence, ‘difference’ and ‘deference’ are represented as the ‘differing’ and ‘deferring’ without the mediation of some ‘other’ thing (i.e., it just ‘is’). Subsequently, $\uparrow \frac{\text{difference}}{\text{deference}}$ approaches the question of ‘What causes the differential and deferential unfolding of things?’ from the perspective of a thing yielding to the necessitation of its own necessity; $\uparrow \frac{\text{difference}}{\text{deference}}$ deems the unfolding to be an immanent movement of difference-within-itself. Hence, every potential, or every thing already exists within the pure materiality of $\uparrow \frac{\text{difference}}{\text{deference}}$. So, creation is constructed and connected in itself; and, $\uparrow \frac{\text{difference}}{\text{deference}}$ is related to the

deferencing/differencing || differencing/deferencing through difference and deference

themselves. Essentially, † difference precludes the be-come-ing. What defines
deference

† difference then is a pure heterogeneity that unfolds within its own —ing.
deference

The above perspective highlights that any actualisation (i.e., rendition) of *Plush* is inadequate for representing the whole of *Plush*. When the presence of a non-presence is engaged as a primary value, a quasi-abstraction validates the insubstantiality of that which is ‘not-there’. As a result, in spite of the fact that the actual and the notational are supposed to be mutually exclusive, the demarcation is blurred because both contribute to making the real ‘real’. It is difficult to explain how the real is both an ‘actual’ and a ‘notational’ at the same time (i.e., the ‘no-thing’ purposely resists explanation because it a ‘not-a-thing’). Thus, as far as explicating the immediacy of the real—the experienced—is concerned, this thesis avows a compromise between that which is broadly deemed as ‘empirical’ and ‘idealistic’.

At this point, it is probably reasonable to assume that isolated studies of the abovementioned components, change, event and continuant, ought to be carried out. How else can anything be said of their interrelation? But, can they be compartmentalised and be examined in succession particularly when this discussion adopts a non-linear schema? For instance, the actualisation of an ‘actual’ is not marked by a successive progression of one ‘actual’ after another ‘actual’. The thesis posits a three-in-one instantaneity that gives the actualised state an all-at-once reality. Therefore, an actualisation is really a collection of immediate actualities made actual through a dynamic field of actual/notation

tendencies²⁷. And so, perception follows from the singularity of pure perception; the repetition of a same: a multiplicity of multiplicities.

To come to grips with a proposition that perpetuates the homogeneous return of heterogeneity, an argument which is to validate the presupposition of (non)determining principles must be convincing. This thesis once again owes much to Deleuze when he elaborates the identification between virtuality and Idea in *Difference and Repetition*. According to him, the virtual is neither a resemblance to, nor a transcendence of, the actual. Though he agrees that the ‘thing’ which initiates an ‘Idea’ (i.e., thought) does not possess empirical existence, Deleuze extends this Kantian precept a step further by proposing that the virtualness of the virtual is dependent on the multiplicity of Ideas. And the real-ness of this virtual-ness is substantiated by the event of unfolding events. While these thoughts radiate a fair degree of vagueness, Deleuze’s theory of sense, where the infinitude of verbs is discussed, seems to make them less convoluted.

Because of their infinitival nature, verbs best describe the ‘absent’. That which is ‘virtual’ seems to the precipitation of ‘—ing’. After all, verbs, being precursors of both passive and active aspects of an actualisation, possess a multiplicative nature. So, virtuality is characterised as an event actualised. Nevertheless, if the relationship binding the virtual and actual is just about actualisation alone, then, the repeatable will merely be reduced to a repetition of the same. Clearly, in context of this discussion, the talked-about repeatability does not convey the impression that repeating is a mere matter of the same thing recurring over and over again. The repeatable must be understood as a continual

²⁷ Implicitly, suppositions that draw upon ‘actual’ and ‘notional’ relations, such as dichotomies, binary opposites and dualities, are erased.

movement that is sanctioned by a differencing. The thesis asserts that difference departs from sameness because the event of its realisation is appropriated by a variation in and through every repeating. Hence, the third hypothesis of perception posits that the purity of perception is maintained by a varying \uparrow difference. This refers to a repeatable deference

differentiality-in-itself.

There is much to say when it comes to drawing up an understanding concerning the repetition of difference/s, as the corpus of work developed by philosophers like Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, and Deleuze shows. Generally speaking, they explain differencing as an ‘unmediated be-coming’. That is, the relations which posit something as ‘something’ occur (with)in some thing itself— the ‘un-negated’. For instance, the becoming of x is a result of an immanent process, whereby intra-relations are realised through a yet-to-be within-ness. Thus, in an attempt to outline the attributes that make up differentiality and deferentiality, the ‘Spinozists’ purport a list of concepts, including ‘eternal return’, ‘duration’ and ‘experimentation’ that will explain an ontology of \uparrow deference. Though an interpretation of these concepts will prove useful here, the difference

discussion seeks to develop the notion of ‘differencing’ from the basic. This intention raises a fundamental question. What is repetition?

The marker, ‘repetition’, conveys a variety of meanings. On the one hand, ‘repeat’ connotes ‘infinity’, ‘automated recurrence’ and ‘same occurrence’. As the classic example of absolute determinism, repetition is an ‘infinite automated recurrence of the same occurrence’. On the other hand, phenomena-related conditions, including ethical, social and political ones, must encourage repeat’s repeatedness. But how can the

‘finality’ of an absolute be reconciled with the ‘continuant’ of the phenomena?

Nietzsche’s musings on the great dice game of existence (*Selections* 283) demonstrates the reconciliation between the determinate and the undeterminate. Like every possible combination that will at some time or other be realised when playing dice, the circularity that permeates the world repeats itself infinitely. That is,

[. . .] since between every ‘combination’ and its next ‘recurrence’ all combinations that are in any way possible would have come about, and each of these combinations conditions the entire sequence of combinations in the same series, then a circular course of absolutely identical series would thereby be demonstrated: the world as a circular course that has already repeated itself infinitely often and that plays its game *in infinitum*.

(Nietzsche, *Selections* 284)

Concisely, repetition corresponds with an advancement that is determined by an overcoming (eternal) returning of the same. And, this leads on to the next question. What is that which is being repeated?

The non-linearity of the real/actualised has been pointed out earlier on in this subsection, ‘The Constituents’²⁸. Subsequently, it is logical to deduce that the repeated does not repeat in a consecutive manner. Given that repetition is not unidirectional, some assumptions follow. First, because repetition is not about ‘repetition *of* something’, it could be deemed ‘etymological’ in essence; it functions within an expanding web of repeatedness-in-itself. Second, repetition is not a process that progresses towards a ‘final goal’; it functions affirmatively as repeatability-in-itself. Third, as repetition sees to a

²⁸ With reference to the discussion on ‘men’ and ‘melodies’ (pp. 53-54).

repeating that is ‘a-same’, it is directly constructed by a shifting field of mutating simultaneity²⁹; it functions purely as repetition-in-itself. As such, the repeated is not a repetition of any one thing, or some things. In fact, the repeatable is a virtuosity that exhibits the discourse of differentiability in an overabundance. Hence, the repeated is a perpetual reconstitution of re-constitution. So, how is repetition produced?

As the repeatability of repetition is conditioned by difference, its unfolding can be described as ‘self-reflexive’. In other words, the condition of differences, as opposed to mimesis, is the given state that enables the self-sustainability of perpetual repetition. The idea of ‘eternal return’, which Nietzsche, Bergson and Deleuze explicate, illustrates an infinite be-coming that differentiates within its own synthesis. This reference to itself suggests a returning that produces the recurrence of an unconditional circular course which must re-repeat.

That is, the effect of repetition as a testament to ‘difference’, which is its complementing affect. If the thesis comes across as repeated and recycled, it is because the framework expressing the law of repetition-difference conveys nothing beyond its self-closing-in. Whilst the constitution belonging to ‘repetition’ and ‘difference’ are necessarily unique, it will be quite impossible to see them as independent. In an attempt to reconcile the apparent contradiction, an analogy follows.

DNA is determined by a twin helix that yields, depending on the combination of chemical structures, a selected set of characteristics. Although DNA serves as a template

²⁹ With reference to Derrida. In *Dissemination* (1981), he says “Now, law is always a law of repetition, and repetition is always submission to a law” (123). While the repeatability of repetition is based on the repeating of the same, this repeated is never a replication. Also, repetition is temporal in that the repeated is always a response to another repeated before it, which is a response to yet another repeated before it, which is a response to yet another repeated before it . . .

for producing thousands of different ‘characteristics’, the multiplicability of this production is left up to the two complementary chains of nucleic acids. In a parallel comparison, repetition is likened to DNA and difference is likened to the twin helix; repetition is the inherent force that necessitates the repeatedness of the repeated and difference is the becoming that materialises the recurrence of this recurrence, that is, differentiability. However, it is also possible to reverse the comparison and perceive difference to be like DNA and repetition to be like the twin-helix. In this exchange of roles, difference becomes the inherent essence that necessitates the recurrence of the recurring, while repetition is the be-coming that materialises the repeating of the repeated, that is, differentiability-in-itself. As such, there is no ‘real’ way of separating differentiability from differentiability-in-itself. The be-*ing* of repetition/difference is composed by the being of a double-ness, which is at once determining and undetermining. So, what can all this come to mean when thinking about perception?

A Theory of Perception

The premise of this discussion suggests that perceiving is not simply a matter of interpreting facts or things. Whilst seeing and believing are integral parts of interpretation, the present thesis speculates that an all-encompassing force accompanies the subjective experience of perceiving events and objects—more will be said of the nature of images in the following chapter.

The wish to locate a basis for thinking about ‘how to know’ and ‘what it is’ has led the present discussion to consider conditions that are related to transcendence. Whilst, in context of this paper, the idea of (pure) transcendence does not impart a ‘practical’ way

of dealing with perception, it, nonetheless, relates a ‘gap’. The impregnation of perception by something that is essentially abstract, ideal and not-there means that the motion, ‘to perceive’, is bound to a principle and not facts of things: the ‘transcendent’. For instance, Bergson explains the transcendent-al as “a [pure] perception which exists in principle rather than in fact [. . .] a vision of matter both immediate and instantaneous” (*Matter* 34). In order to outline a theory of perception at the end of this section, the present discussion needs to work out several issues which Bergson raises. They include the following: Why does the transcendent exist in “principle rather than a fact”? What makes the transcendent-al a “matter”? How is transcendent-al-ness “both immediate and instantaneous”?

At this point, it is probably useful for the discussion to state its understanding and employment of the terms ‘transcendent’ and ‘transcendental’. For the sake of pure convenience, a general explanation of these concepts is extracted from *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy* (2003). According to its textbook-like explanation, something is ‘transcendent’ if it lies beyond a boundary. And, something is ‘transcendental’ if it lies neither within nor without a boundary “but is, rather, a matter of the essential nature of those very limits themselves” (Bunnin 731). In short, this explanation establishes an *a priori*, whereby the knowable is not validated by fact or experience.

The issues that concern transcendent-al-ness are important to the development of a theory of perception because in context of this paper, studying the hermeneutics nexus is informed by adjoining fields of investigations, including epistemology, ontology and subjectivity. And, the transcendent is a concept that explicitly aligns itself with an analysis concerning ‘how to know’, ‘what is there to know’ and ‘what is it’. Therefore,

earlier on in this chapter, concepts, like pure perception, singularity of pure perception and differentiability-in-itself, convey content that is ‘metaphysical’. So, how can they be explained in a sensible, ‘matter-physical’, way?

The notion of transcendent-al-ness provokes two questions, which will be addressed in turn. The first question is ‘What constitutes the transcendent-al?’ . And, the second question is ‘What does the transcendent-al justify?’ . The ‘answers’ to these two questions will shed light on the following concern. How does the transcendent (and its transcendent-al-ness) contribute to the process of interpreting things—a theory of perception?

To a large extent, arguments that are transcendental in nature respond to one specific problem, which is ‘how to know the knowable’. According to Robert Stern, though the inception of transcendental arguments remains a subject of debate, there is clear consensus that, within epistemology, the paradigmatic examples of it begin with Kant’s Transcendental Deduction and Refutation of Idealism, and his Second Analogy, in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (2). Stern also recognises that P. F. Strawson’s reconstruction of Kant’s Transcendental Deduction in *The Bounds of Sense* (1966), Hilary Putnam’s attempt to refute brain-in-a-vat scepticism in *Reason, Truth and History* (1981) and Donald Davidson’s defence of the claim that ‘beliefs are by nature generally true’ contribute to the progression of transcendental argument. Nevertheless, other more controversial instances of transcendental arguments exist. These include Aristotle’s explanation of ‘non-contradiction’ in “Book Gamma” of the *Metaphysics*, Descartes’s defence of the *cogito* and John Searle’s transcendental argument for external realism.

Although transcendental arguments vary in terms of their perspectives and explanations, they converge in one aspect. Generally speaking, they wish to conceive a way whereby knowledge can be legitimised. In other words, proponents of transcendental arguments seek to map out an ultimate ground for justifying the ‘known’ and ‘to-be-known’. Therefore, one of the most distinctive features of those arguments put forward by the likes of Kant, Strawson, Putnam, and Davidson concerns the *a priori*. That is, *X* is a necessary condition for *x*. For instance, existence is a condition for interpretation (and just about every other possible occurrence).

The other feature concerning transcendental arguments, which the present discussion wishes to highlight, pertains to the deduction of conditions that determine *X* as ‘*X*’, as well as *x* as ‘*x*’. In both cases, the objective is to delineate the constituents that support an appropriate use of reason, which in turn helps to establish (undisputable) knowledge. For instance, in spite of the difference in their philosophical trajectories, both Descartes and Kant seek to theorise how knowledge can be justified as true. According to Descartes, the *cogito* is a reflection of one’s own consciousness. Because the *cogito* is aware of its own ‘insecurity’ (e.g., it rationalises what is real and what is not), which leads to scepticism, it becomes a method for determining ‘what is certain’. As for Kant, knowledge is implicitly present in a ‘common consciousness’, which is the ‘transcendental’. Thus, the transcendental is a necessary condition for every experience. It is a ‘starting point’ that underscores all possible experiences. For instance, the ‘innate nature’ that gives the mind its ability to formulate perceptions is transcendental in essence. As such, the certainty of the known is validated by an autonomous rationality—an *a priori*.

Though Descartes and Kant offer different sets of rationalities in terms of how knowledge is constructed, both of their theories agree that true knowledge cannot be found in how things appear to be. Therefore their theories, which strive to delineate how a subject relates to an event, look to conceptualise a way of understanding how things are being interpreted. However, there is a distinct difference between transcendental arguments that aim to say something about how cognitive faculties function (e.g., Descartes) and those that highlight the existence of an ‘outside’ (e.g., Kant).

Transcendental arguments that deal with cognition are concerned with explicating the relationship between a ‘self’ and an event, while the ones that deal with the cannot-be-known are concerned with identifying ‘how things function’. The intention here is to study the nature of how things function, rather than how things are. This is because, more often than not, a discussion that hopes to establish ‘how things must be’ leads to an uncertainty with regards to whether the very proposition in question is justifiable in terms of its coherence and viability.

The eventual uncertainty which results from an argument that is transcendental in proposition seems to connote a sense of ‘pointlessness’. For instance, to believe x , the truth or falsity of ‘ x ’ must first be established. But, is it possible to determine that x is x so as to believe that x is indeed x ? Thus, the argument that x is true only if it can be confirmed as true comes across as tautological. In view that the intention of the present discussion is an attempt to interpret the concept of ‘transcendent-al-ness’, the implications which it bears and the kinds of relationships which it establishes are central concerns. That is, how does a transcendent-al function? In short, the purpose is to elucidate a principle (i.e., a ‘transcendent’) of some kind. And, this principle will

coincide with Bergson's idea of pure perception, where the "immediate" and "instantaneous" play important roles.

The premise of Bergson's theory is that some 'thing' *is* a necessary condition of perception. Therefore, if not for this condition, which necessitates perception, it will be impossible to perceive. However, what is this 'thing' that orchestrates a perception? In what 'mode' does it function? What kind of existence does it imply? With an intention to arrive at possible responses that may answer these questions, the discussion turns to address the following issue. What is the nature of a thing that bears 'immediacy'? As the present argument goes on to explore how a 'reality' presents itself as itself to itself, a perspective concerning the ontology of an immanent difference is construed.

What does the 'real' consist of? In the fifth century BC, Democritus defines the 'real', or 'material', as bits and pieces of indivisible, impenetrable atoms. Though these uncountable components are immutable in terms of shape and size, no other determinable feature can be said of them. Similar to a huge jigsaw puzzle, where unique irregular pieces fit to form an intended picture, Democritus puts forward that the world is made up by material components that jostle, repel and, eventually, bond. In order to comment on the 'real-ity' or 'material-ity' that Democritus speaks about, the discussion will now highlight a more recent development which involves categorising the real.

According to Frege and Popper, there are three categories of real things. The first consists of things discernible by the senses, the second consists of all things psychological and the third consists of things that are abstract in nature. Indeed, it is difficult to accept these categories, especially the second and the third ones, as 'material'. After all, the system upheld by both Frege and Popper could well be a theory of the mind

and not of the material. For instance, regardless of the category, the perceived is ultimately an interpretation. To put it simplistically, a perception is a mediated perspective which the mind produces. As such, the ‘thing’ that constitutes the perceived is neither strictly ‘material’ nor ‘non-material’ (i.e., ideal).

Nevertheless, the purpose here is not to figure out what is material, and what is not. The goal is not to have ready answers for questions like ‘How does material substance occur?’, ‘How does the substantive integrate into a whole?’ and ‘How does substance correlate with attribute?’. Hence, the focus is not to deal with problems that are conceptual in nature (e.g., the relationship between matter and form). Instead, the discussion looks to reinterpret the ‘transcendent’, ‘real’ and ‘material’ so as to express a perspective involving thing/event, subject and discourse.

Before the discussion proceeds to deliver a theory of perception, a summary of the arguments that have been presented thus far follows. The opening paragraph of this subsection, ‘A Theory of Perception’, states that the act perceiving is not a matter of interpreting facts or things. Furthermore, some ‘thing’ prompts the ability to perceive. Because this imperative principle is the condition that ascribes possible perception/interpretation, something transcendent-al is already in operation. That is to say, the transcendent-al-ness of this ‘thing’ articulates a structure that necessarily governs all possible possibilities. For instance, the possibility of perceiving something is constructed, arranged and assembled in such a way that a particular perception can become.

Central to the theory of perception is the idea of ‘spontaneity’. Effectively, there is an element of surprise that pre-empts the approximation between representations of

thing/event, subject and discourse. The non-linearity of this dis-order constructs and maintains a freedom that sees to ‘impermanence’. A temporariness that refreshes itself again and again, this ‘spontaneous nihilism’ does not and cannot admit certain certainty, but certain uncertainty. At this point, the discussion needs to elaborate what ‘spontaneous nihilism’ can come to mean. While the word ‘nihilism’ connotes ‘lacking’, in the context of the present argument, this ‘not there’ is the precursor of ‘something (being) there’. Because the ‘lacking’ is the condition that determines the unfolding of possibilities, it affects a spontaneous producing (i.e., the lack being always positive in its lack—*ing*).

Furthermore, the ground-lessness of the yet-to-be-completed is exactly that which endorses the thesis of this discussion. The returning of the uncomplete endorses free immediacy which constitutes pure discourse—an unfolding of pure perception, singularity of pure perception and differentiality-in-itself. That is to say, metaphorically, the idea of ‘casting in stone’ is possible only because the stone remains yet-to-be cast. In spite of the apparent validation which the ‘lacking’ extends, the aforementioned ‘lacking’ continues to inflict uneasiness precisely because something is just lacking. After all, how can the ‘lack’ be deployed to explain the ‘present’? As the discussion seeks to develop a thesis that *does*³⁰ perception, it takes special care to deliver a reasoning that is ‘practical’.

The attempt is to construct a theory of perception that is ‘open’ and ‘applicable’. Because the thesis at hand does not intend to pronounce closure in any sort of way, the material it presents will constantly engage with ‘possibilities’. But, offering fresh perspectives is only one way of laying bare the elements that may constitute the possible. Perhaps, what is more significant is the creativity that is being demonstrated through the

³⁰ Deleuze talks about ‘doing’ metaphysics, thereby arguing for immanence (*Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, Trans. Anne Boyman. New York: Zone Books, 2001).

re-newing of possibilities. For instance, the creative-ness that sees to the re-generation of interpretations repeatedly and repeatedly. In this case, offering a theory of perception is about analysing perception through relating perception to itself. That is, the argument has to be accountable for both external—the transcendent—as well as internal—the immanent—differentiability. As such, the transcendent-al and the immanent are perceived as ‘just as important’ (e.g., transcendence is not privileged over immanence—immanent *to* some thing). The bringing together of transcendent-immanent marks the experiencing of an event to be an experience within itself. For instance, respectively, plurality, virtuality and repeatability occur within the confines of the plural, virtual and repeatable itself. The affinity between the two denotes a *within-ness* of transcendence in immanence and immanence in transcendence. This points to the singularising of pure perception.

Of pure perception: A single-ness of the immediate extrapolates from the oneness of pure perception. A spontaneous return extrapolates from the singularity of a real difference. A difference of be-comings extrapolates from the freedom of return. A plurality of actualities extrapolates from the temporality of becoming. A plane of consistency extrapolates from the actuality of potentiality. The presence of a not-there extrapolates from a samenessness: nothingness: the openness of a no-thing that necessitates the possible with possibility.

The notion of *no-thing* encapsulates perception-in-itself. The process of forming and perceiving a perception is imbued with the infinite, which points to temporary determinateness. The dynamism of moment-to-moment representations marks the continual birth of perception, and so the perception of any thing/event can never be decided. Thus, *no-thing* denies the becoming of ‘*x*-thing’, thereby ensuring the

heterogeneity of an ever be-come-*ing*. Subsequently, in no-thingness, the ‘transcendent-immanent’, is. How can this premise be validated?

The concept of transcendent-immanent is put to a test when dealing with issues such as those concerning ethics and politics. For instance, from the standpoint of immanence, transcendence poses a great degree of difficulty for a subject’s acceptance of his/her ‘subjectification’. That is, since transcendence yields a sense of haplessness because there is always ‘Someone’ out there that ‘Decides the Best Course of Action’, what is it that can empower the subject to decide, if anything at all? In other words, how could an ‘oppressed’, ‘marginalised’ and ‘subjugated’ subject know that s/he has not accepted her/his position unknowingly? Similarly, from the standpoint of transcendence, immanence poses problems too. For instance, can the S/subject be unconstructable and deconstructing at the same time? In this example, how can the interrelation between the transcendent and immanent be reconciled? Questions of this type steer the dissertation towards a premature and inadequate end. However, as mentioned earlier on, the thesis does not worry itself with apprehending problematics concerning the nature of this or that concept. And, for sure, it is impossible to handle the problematics involving immanence and transcendence without first laying down parameters that are non-refutable, immutable and all-encompassing.

In place of assessing and arriving at a conclusion concerning the workings underlying the immanent and the transcendent, perhaps it may be more viable to think about how “they produce while remaining in themselves” (Deleuze, *Expressionism* 171). An example demonstrates how expressive immanence is sustained by a thoroughgoing affirmation of transcendence (178).

A piece of paper, 20cm in diameter, can be folded into symmetrical halves again and again. Soon, the paper will become too small for any more folding. Though the physical division of the paper has reached an end, the possibility of dividing it has not, and cannot. One may argue that this division must come to an end because science has proven that all matter can be reduced to the indivisibility of some ‘thing’. Nonetheless, owing to advancements made in fields related to scientific research, such as technology, data management and information sharing, even tinier matters, including the proton and quark, have been discovered. Besides, adopting such a stance reduces the divisibility of the paper to an entirely observable process: an observation conducted by the eye and understood by the mind.

However, if the exercise is pondered upon based on purely intellectual terms, then, for every possible half that is considered, another smaller half must presumably exist. Thus, all halving of the paper belong to a process and not a conclusive end. As such, the infinite halves are attributes expressing the endless possibilities that a single substance, the paper, yields. The paper and its halves are united as one. Notwithstanding the oneness of attribute and substance, the paths which these elements map out are independent of each other. While each fold of the paper is an attributive part of substance’s infinitude, this attribute is but one of the countless unique attributes to come. And, whilst substance expresses itself via a collection of possible attributes, it is, nonetheless, complete and whole on its own. Hence, the example above highlights a rigorous commitment to *within-ness* and singularity. That is, a ‘one’ manifesting itself in the spontaneity of ‘many’³¹.

³¹ With regards to the concept of One and Many, Deleuze says, “Expression is on the one hand an explication, an unfolding of what expresses itself, the One manifesting itself in the Many [. . .] Its multiple

Before this chapter comes to a close, the discussion will summarise the argument which has been presented. The above three sub-sections, namely ‘The Method’, ‘The Constituents’ and ‘A Theory of Perception’, argue that the study of perception is not limited to interpreting the representation of a thing/event to a subject. As a matter of fact, the constitution of a perception results from an undeterminateness that has little, or nothing, to do with ‘ordinary’ perceiving. Being in-itself, the pureness of perception irrevocably acts upon the acquisition of a meaning, an interpretation. Without relying on the experience of experiencing, the returning principle of this within-ness emanates a chain of actualising possibilities. Basically, the singular becoming of a plural multiplicity invokes a thesis that constructs an outside within an inside and an inside within an outside. That is to say, the purity of this spontaneity springs forth from a unitary transcendent-immanent. Hence, this constructs the immanently inside/outside through the unfolding of the transcendently outside/inside.

The co-existence of the transcendent-immanent produces a hybridism, which bonds an ‘other’ with a ‘one’. The singularity of a pluralness is constituted within an enclosure: a spontaneity which no-thingness perpetrates. This perpetration or ‘happening’ connotes the unfolding and refolding of many in one. Further, the constant re-birth-*ing* to a present relates a virtuous circularity that embraces creative expression.

Though the current chapter sidelines the issue of ‘what contributes to an expression of a perception’, the proceeding one will deal with this issue in depth. As the focus of Chapter Two is to examine the nature of mental image, both exterior and interior relations play key roles. The purpose is to decipher how any encounter between the

expression, on the other hand involves Unity. The One remains involved in what expresses it, imprinted in what unfolds it, immanent in whatever manifests it” (*Expressionism* 16).

‘exterior’ and ‘interior’ actively effects a host of affective tones³². Thus, the next chapter is about the in/dependence of the observer, the observed and the observable. Specifically, *Thinking About the Nature of Mental Images* plans to examine the concept of ‘objectivity’, ‘experiencing’ and ‘experientiality’.

³² With reference to Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, Chapter Two, “Repetition for Itself”.

Chapter Two: *Thinking about the Nature of Mental Images*

The previous chapter, *Thinking about the Nature of Perception*, is about the ontology of perceiving. It examines issues concerning the scope, basis and possibility of the act of perceiving. The present chapter, *Thinking about the Nature of Mental Images*, studies how interpretation ‘becomes’. In this analysis of how events, things and processes become, the discussion seeks to delineate the circumstances that lead to the ‘experiencing’ of a becoming.

The intention to focus on the ‘picture’ that is pieced together by an ‘experience’ invariably foregrounds the role played by a subject. As such, the subject is identified as a ‘being’ embodied with experience and thought. That is, a ‘self’ in possession of the capacity for self consciousness and independent deliberation. In view of the fact that the subject is perfectly capable of entertaining first-person type of experiences, how does this self-reflexivity impact the perceivability of the experienced, assuming that it does at all?

There is a need to deal with some subject-centric issues prior to describing a set of constitutions that may contribute to an understanding of what mental images are composed of. These issues include ‘What is the function of a subject in the exercise of seeing?’ ‘Does s/he serve as evidence for the existence of things/events (i.e., the material world)?’ and ‘Is the subject constituted as s/he constitutes?’ An illustration is presented for the purpose of identifying possible ‘answers’ to these questions.

Chad discovers an old photograph album containing pictures of his youth as he is clearing out a wardrobe in his bedroom. He flips through the photograph album and begins to reminisce about the house which he had stayed at, getting caught for breaking

into the school compound, spending every available dime at an arcade, and feeling the excitement of giving his first kiss to a girl named Kim³³. Although the contents of the photograph album are essentially 'static', thoughts such as those which Chad experiences occur because he already has knowledge of what had happened in the past. Therefore, though static, the photographs are able to arouse a chain of dynamic experiences. That is to say, the 'house', 'school compound', 'arcade', and 'Kim' arouse specific emotions within Chad because of his past experiences. Hence, the pictures, as Chad sees them, are perceived in a context that he has projected. Whilst he cannot backtrack and relive this past, he is able to re-project, regardless of whether faithfully or not, the past in conjunction with either this or that picture.

In Chad's reminiscence, it does not matter whether the house, school compound, arcade, or Kim is 'real' (i.e., in a 'sensible' sense). The thing of importance is his abstract envisaging of these things/events. So, as he (i.e., a subject) goes through the motion of seeing (i.e., perceiving) those old pictures, his emotions (i.e., perception) bind each snapshot with things/events that are not necessarily present. And so, the emotion and significance of those pictures stem largely from an imagination of what they have come to represent, albeit momentarily. This abstract force steers the subject towards a certain perspective which yields a specific set of meanings. In the above example, the pictures cause the rekindling of childhood memory.

The 'intent' which intention extends permeates all acts of interpretation. Thus, the intentionality that guides Chad's interpretation (i.e., why he interprets the photographs in a particular way) of the pictures he finds is not a trait exclusive to him only. In the case of

³³ A song by Nickleback, *Photograph* (2006).

the abovementioned example, the visual image of each picture evokes, for the subject, a content that intertwines with an abstract process, which sets the mind to motion.

Similarly, whether a subject is sitting for an examination, travelling on the road, or taking part in a 400-metre relay competition, tangible cues serve as intangible/mental markers pointing to the physical state of things. Thus, the clock, the landmarks that line the travel route and the baton that passes from the first to the last sprinter are visible indicators which influence psychological assessments. These things act as ‘yardsticks’ that convey a range of possible impressions, including ‘It is nearly time to go home’, ‘Seven kilometres more to go’ and ‘The team is ahead of the other five’, respectively.

Certainly, the interpretation of any marker is non-exhaustive and so, the same clock, landmarks and baton may come to mean something else for another subject. For instance, whilst a shopkeeper sees the clock hung on the wall as an indicator of ‘when to close the shop and head home’, a casual shopper may take it as a mere decorative item. Subsequently, a marker signals different meanings all the time because the inclination that a subject has changes from moment to moment (or, in context of the thesis to come, ‘from moment within moment’). So, although the shopkeeper sees the time on the clock as indicative of when to pack up and go, the thought that he has registered zero sales for the day, for instance, may also occur congruently at that very moment (in-itself).

If a subject is the medium via which perceiving and the interpretation of things/events are made possible, then, an understanding of how this perceiving comes about is of key importance. Whilst it is pertinent to study how the subject brings perspective to phenomena, this assumption implies that interpretation is construed as a ‘transitive’ activity, where meanings are attached to a thing/event. As such, interpretation

entails the exercise of interpreting something ‘as’ some thing: ‘to interpret’. If the interpretation of interpretation is to be advanced in this manner, does it not run contrary to the hypothesis of pure perception as outlined in Chapter One?³⁴ To analyse the birth(*ing*) and act of interpretation, the discussion will now approach the matter by studying the correlation between three aspects of perceiving or ‘seeing’. Therefore the following sub-sections will examine issues that concern ‘how to see’, ‘what is there to see’ and ‘the ability to see’.

That is, the question, ‘What makes up the nature of mental images?’ is tackled by delivering a constituent that is composed of three elements: the conscious-material-intentional. The singularisation of these three parts plays an important role in conveying a holistic perception(-in-itself). Since the realisation of consciousness-materialness-intentionality is (with)in perception, the realising of the conscious-material-intentional maps the workings *of* interpretation.

How to See?

In order to approach the subject of ‘seeing’, the discussion hereby makes references to the example of Chad and the photograph album once again. The objects that Chad sees in the album are collectively known as ‘photographs’. Despite their being mere images, what he sees each time is a stimulant of some wonderful memory. The equation $x = y$ (i.e., photograph = memory) expresses this context in a symbolic form. However, ‘ x

³⁴ Interpretation is pronounced by an exteriority of relations. Because the exercise of interpreting results from the act of ‘*making* meaning’, the reading of a thing/event refers to a structure that is ‘independent’ in essence. In other words, there is a ‘being’ operating within the interpretability of an interpretation. Hence, it is justifiable to conclude that ‘the interpreted’ possesses a presence that is (in) itself presentable. (Note: while the thing/event exists solitarily, the interpreter, on the other hand, is handicapped without the former).

= y' is variable. For instance, if someone else, like Chad's girlfriend of three days, was to pick up that very same album, she too would see the photographs. But, for her, those same photographs may not necessarily be indicators of emotional recall. She may see the photographs as faded yellow sheets of paper that serve no purpose other than being dust collectors which are to be thrown away: $x = z$ (i.e., photograph = trash). Between Chad and his girlfriend, the marker 'photographs' bears two meanings: 'p-h-o-t-o-g-r-a-p-h-s' represents the concept of 'memory' for the former, and 'trash' for the latter.

Although the interpretation of 'photographs' changes from subject to subject, one thing stays constant amidst the fluctuation. Regardless of whether 'photographs' is equated with 'memory', or 'trash', the perception of it is structured in terms of '*as* something'. That is, 'photographs *as* memory', 'photographs *as* trash': 'photographs' *as* some 'things'. Thus, a marker, in the case of the examples mentioned here, 'photographs', carries with it a host of yet-to-be-determined references/equations. Consequently, an interpretation is represented by two interactive modes, one part constant and one part variable. The doubleness maintains a constancy, which functions as a 'totality' dictating possible meanings, and, a variability, which symbolises the 'replaceability' between plausible meanings.

The argument above assumes that the graphemes, 'p-h-o-t-o-g-r-a-p-h-s', refer to a set of specific variables, including 'memory' and 'trash'. The supposition presumes 'photographs' to be the 'constant' mode and the meanings that have come to attach themselves to it as the 'variables'. However, is it possible that these two very same variables, 'memory' and 'trash', be referenced by 's-o-m-e-t-h-i-n-g e-l-s-e' instead of 'p-h-o-t-o-g-r-a-p-h-s'? In other words, neither the reference, in this case, 'photographs' nor

the referenced, ‘memory’ and ‘trash’, is in any way constant. Being variables in their own right, they bear the potential to refer and be referred to.

To further discuss the notion of doubleness, the letter s is employed to designate ‘something else’. Once again, returning to the photograph album illustration, it has been established that Chad interprets x as y , and his girlfriend, x as z . Also, it is plausible to conclude that Chad had at least interpreted a part of s as y and his girlfriend had interpreted a part of s as z . That is, ‘something’ has come to mean some ‘thing’ (i.e., s) like ‘memory’ (i.e., y) and ‘trash’ (i.e., z). No doubt this does not discount the possibility that both Chad and his girlfriend may just see s as x (i.e., seeing the ‘something’ as ‘photograph’). Nonetheless, whether Chad sees x as y (i.e., ‘photographs’ as a marker for ‘emotions’), or s as y (i.e., ‘something’ as a marker for ‘emotions’), the y element is determined in the interpretation of what he sees. Similarly, whether Chad’s girlfriend sees x as z (i.e., ‘photographs’ as a marker for ‘trash’), or s as z (i.e., ‘something’ as a marker for ‘trash’), the z element is determined in the interpretation of what she sees.

A reversal of roles results, considering that the inferred may just be the ‘constant’, and not ‘variable’, mode. That is to say, no matter the point of inference, the interpretation of the inferred is fixed. In Chad’s instance, whether he sees ‘photographs’, or any ‘something else’, the conceptual content is to be associated with childhood memories anyway. Therefore, any ‘something’ will eventually lead to the feelings that Chad experiences. Accordingly, while it is reasonable to posit that ‘photographs’ arouses a state of emotional recall on Chad’s part, it is hard to justify that he must have seen ‘photographs’. At best, the case is one whereby he sees ‘something’ that connotes ‘photographs’, which leads to the reminiscence.

In short, the blurring of the two modes (c.f., ‘constant’ and ‘variable’) highlights that it serves limited purpose to assign determinate and indeterminate modes in the act of perception—the undeterminate (i.e., yet-to-be-determinateness) construes anyway. Especially so when it is unclusive³⁵ how and why markers, such as ‘dog’ and ‘cat’, yield interchangeable but opposite meanings, including ‘lovable’ and ‘nonchalant’. Hence, instead of addressing the topic of ‘how to see’ in a correlative manner, which demands a detailed study of function and concept, the discussion at hand examines ‘relation’ as a fundament of effecting an expression of sense and of meaning.

Although the notion of ‘function and concept’ will not be further developed here, it does not mean that the idea of correspondence is abandoned altogether. As a matter of fact, the conjunction, ‘as’, is to be considered following the purpose of wanting to articulate how sense and meaning may link up. Besides, the process of ‘seeing’ is denoted by situating x as different from y . Thus, the experience of x and y are unique and one qualifies the other. The question is, how is x ‘set out’ as x , and y ‘set out’ as y ?

For instance, x and y are being put into their respective context. So, x symbolises ‘animal’ and y symbolises ‘dog’. Thus, ‘something’ (again, let the marker be symbolised by s) is perceived/seen as x (i.e., animal) and x is in turn perceived/seen as y (i.e., dog). Briefly, to perceive/see x as y is to interpret ‘ x ’ as such. Furthermore, to perceive/see s as x is to interpret ‘ s ’ as such (likewise, to perceive/see s as y is to interpret ‘ s ’ as such). In other words, to perceive/see ‘dog’ as representative of ‘animal’ is to interpret it and to perceive/see ‘something’ as representative of ‘animal’ is to interpret it as well. The point to note is that s represents ‘nonchalant’ and ‘lovable’ notwithstanding the interpreter’s

³⁵ The thesis perceives the ‘inconclusiveness’ to be a necessary condition. A thorough investigation of this presumed essentiality is to be found in the next chapter, *Thinking about the Nature of Meaning-making*.

perception of what it stands for (i.e., it is of no matter whether the latter perceives/sees a dog).

Hence, it is probably justifiable to make two assertions concerning interpretation. The first aspect deals with the selectivity of what is perceived that leads to a negated outcome eventually. The second aspect deals with the ‘as’ predication that opens up the act of perceiving (anything) to various interpretations. Clearly, both aspects conjoin to imply that the discourse of experience is not constituted by the mere interpretation of empirical material as ‘it is’, but is associated with how the interpreter/perceiver/subject ‘sees’ the thing/event. On this account, anything that is to be interpreted must first of all be located within a context of some sort. That is to say, something preliminary envisages the way to see. This ‘pre-text’ shapes the possibility as well as the producibility of a ‘some thing’ that is to be seen. In essence, this produce, which gives rise to a multitude of experiences, is the result of a textualisation that co-relates the non-sense and sense.

Though it seems plausible to regard the relationship between non-sense and sense as one that is marked by the transformation of a ‘not-there’ to ‘there’, any assignment of an actualised state is readily forestalled by the unactualisable—how else can producibility do its work? Thus is there any actual (or, ‘real’) relationship between non-sense and sense then? Especially, when non-sense can never ‘become’ in terms of sense and sense can never be ‘in effect’ to express non-sense.

The argument at hand asserts that the dynamic exchange between signs and signs is expressed by an arbitrary relation. For instance, $x = x$ and $x = y$ connote different meanings. In order to establish how $x = x$, the designation of x as x has to be determined *a priori*. However, because interpretation keeps the correlation between signs and signs

undetermined, the extension of open-ended possibilities professes x as y , or whatever symbol. That is, there is no equating of x to anything. The expectation of winter transforming into spring illustrates this point. On the assumption that the phenomenon of winter transforming into spring is a fact, it should not make any difference whether the observation is represented by $x = x$ and $x = y$. Both of these equations express the transition of winter turning to spring unanimously because they do not denote anything other than the occurrence itself. Thus, ‘ x ’ and ‘ y ’ designate as well as relate *to* the same thing. But, the basis that designates and relates x as $x = x$ as $x = y$ is acceptable only to the extent that ‘as’ and ‘=’ refer to the process of winter transforming to spring. And, ‘ x ’ and ‘ y ’ must be connected and mediated by a common ‘something’. Nevertheless, it has already been noted earlier on that the “connection” and “mediation”, which leads to a “something else”, is necessarily arbitrary. By the token that x as $x = x$ does not convey ‘something’ *a priori*, the representation can only be understood via assigned references, like $x = y$, which distinguish between signs and signs.

One way of expressing how a sign can take on multiple guises is to look at the intersections produced by an equilateral triangle. Imagine that each 60-degree angle intersects the opposite polygon at its middle. No matter from which corner the intersection starts, these points are designated as x , y and z consecutively. In other words, where x and y intersects is also where y and z , and x and z , intersect. In spite of being represented by various signs, the reference that cuts x and y , y and z , y and z , and, x and z is the same. If this reasoning is applicable to an assertion made earlier on concerning the correlation between a ‘one’ and the ‘many’, regardless of the point of reference, the meaning assigned to a sign is determined by something outside of the representation.

And, since the subject has a part to play in connecting a sign with its possible meanings, interpretation owes itself to an ‘outside’ which mediates.

Particularly when perception is a consequence of ‘what a subject sees’, central to the study of interpretation is the examination of how this external intervention affects a perception. If this assertion is considered to be valid—for the time being anyway—what is the process that contributes to a subject’s ‘seeing’? Once again, it is crucial to remember that the objective of the present discussion is to examine perception in terms of it being an activity (i.e., the act of perceiving) and not of objects. In view of this intention, the following describes the process in brevity. The act of perceiving involves an image. While an image is a projected picture of some ‘thing’, it remains to be part of a structure that correlates images through a web of casual relations. Apart from being an integral node of a system, which is mapped out for the purpose of differentiating one projected thing from another, an image also functions as a marker for particular mental state(s). The subjectivity here conveys the feelings, opinions and interpretations of a consciousness which refers to a first-person point of view.

Specifically, making sense of an image hinges upon how the conscious and unconscious intend it. A string of problems mapped out by the philosophy of the mind would follow if the discussion was to examine the nature of human thought. But central to the concern of the proposition at hand is an account of how the subject (i.e., his/her consciousness) meaning-makes. The task is to deliver an observation that will advance a primary point of reference. In turn, this premise will express the relation between the material and immaterial, conscious and unconscious, and physical and mental.

Like the structure that presides over the significance of an image, an experience/interpretation is governed by a specific framework as well. For instance, the distinction between colours is a result of a corresponding awareness that tells the subject, 'red is not blue'. The ability to detect an assortment of colours is, then, a phenomenal experience that stems from a complex combination of varying hues, intensities and saturations. Furthermore, if this bundle of experiences is indeed encapsulated within a phenomenon, it will be credible to think of the occurrence as some thing that is situated in space. For instance, information gathered in the area of cognitive research supports this conjecture. To elaborate a little bit more, studies on what effects vision shed light on the roles played by three axes. Although these axes are independent of each other, they co-relate to form the geometric structure of the visual field. As a result, they determine 'what is being seen'. The application of these findings to the above example concerning colour theory yields the following deduction. The ability to differentiate a spectrum of colours is a consequence of the corresponding variation and intersection between the three axes. That is to say, the phenomenal space of colour is in direct correlation with the three-dimensional space of the visual field.

Hence, according to the present argument, every thing/event/image is interpretable because the conscious 'scrambles' a corresponding interpretation within a boundary of space (for example, Chad's interpretation of the photographs is bound to the memory he has of his childhood). Thus, it is possible to interpret because interpretation can be represented consciously, directly and cognitively. However, not all experiences are observable and structurable. For instance, the 'warmness' conveyed by colours like red, orange and yellow, and the 'coolness' conveyed by blue, green, and purple are

intrinsic qualities. That is, it is neither possible to observe nor explain why red is ‘warm’ and blue is ‘cool’. Perhaps perceiving/‘seeing’ is not reducible to the coherent, determinable and corporeal then?

What is there to See?

The assumption that there is a correlation between the two concepts, consciousness and seeing, prompts a host of challenges. For instance, the task inherits the problems that have plagued critical thinking since the inception of dualism³⁶. Amongst other dichotomies, including the ‘free’ and ‘determined’ as well as the ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’, it is the demarcation of the ‘mental’ from the ‘physical’ that holds special interest here. The mental-physical relationship provokes examination of how a ‘mental’ impression that is generated by the ‘conscious’ connects with a ‘physical’ extension that is generated by a ‘thing/event/image’. In order to explore the connection between a ‘thing’ and an ‘interpretation’, the discussion proceeds to read sections of Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*.

In his introduction to the Penguin edition of Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1989), Paul O’Prey comments that “written in the last year of the nineteenth century [it] can be seen as the first twentieth-century novel, with its climate of doubt and vagueness, its loss of moral confidence, its need for ‘belief’ in the midst of moral wilderness, its exploration of the subconscious, and its affirmation of individual freedom” (Conrad 23-24)³⁷. Nevertheless, how does the conscious experience of Conrad’s novel come about?

³⁶ Basically, entities are divided into two categories of unique substances. More will be said about Cartesian-style dualism shortly.

³⁷ Paul O’Prey’s “Introduction” to the Penguin Books edition of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1989).

In this context, how does the written word contribute to the impression that there is need to determine a “belief”, explore what goes on in the subconscious and affirm personal freedom. In other words, how is it possible that an interpretation (i.e., something intangible) emerges from the brain (i.e., something tangible)? The question is this: To what extent does a subject’s perceptual experience depend on the mental interpretation of external stimulants?

What are the relations between the so-called ‘mental’ and ‘physical’? Can there be any relationship between two separate metaphysical categories when traditionally the mental is accepted as an expression of the mind and the physical an extension of the material? The discussion briefly studies Descartes’ theory concerning how things appear to a subject so as to gain an insight on ‘what is there to see?’

Descartes purports a notion of dualism that sees to the division of the world into two entities: mental and physical³⁸. Accordingly, the mental is intangible and so it must be non-spatial, while the physical being tangible is presented in a space. Subsequently, a subject is a duality since s/he is made up of a body and a mind. In spite of their apparent distinction, the body and the mind interact in order for ‘things to happen’. On the one hand, the physical aspect experiences sensations which in turn lead the mind to generate an impression, or a thought. On the other hand, the activities that go on in the mind are being realised and conveyed through speech and actions. Because that which is physical affirms the presence of the mental, and vice versa, this interaction extends a percept that is validated by the observable. That is, Descartes considers the thinking aspect of the mind as conscious and the extension of this mentalness into space as physical. The result

³⁸ This is also reminiscent of Aristotle’s essence-substance dichotomy.

is a perception of the observed. This discussion proceeds to examine those aspects of Descartes's work that are relevant here³⁹.

Firstly because Descartes proclaims that the mental is 'conscious', he argues that a subject's interpretability is dependent on the state(s) of consciousness. This claim implies that a subject must always be in one state of consciousness or another. Regardless of whether a subject is aware of it or not, s/he is constantly interpreting his/her surroundings. For instance, O'Prey asserts that Conrad is "a much better short-story and novella writer than novelist. He was on the whole unable to sustain the tension of a full-length novel (with the exception of *Nostromo*)" (Conrad 22). By virtue of this comment, O'Prey must already have as a literary critic a preconceived notion of what makes a (good) novel or novella. Only then will he be able to appraise a piece of literary work. Thus he explains, "*Heart of Darkness* [. . .] has no slackening of tension, the plot is wonderfully compact and the 'movement' is a compelling blend of delay and haste [. . .]" (22). So, O'Prey's comment extrapolates an implicit standard (which could have been made explicit elsewhere) against which novels and novellas are measured. While the intention is to interpret *Heart of Darkness*, this state of consciousness is neither 'straightforward' nor 'singular'. This is because the shifts in consciousness result in a moment-to-moment actualisation of different interpretations. And so, a reading is actualised through a contest of interpretations. Therefore, a subject's existence is validated by a stream of consciousness that is of varying states.

³⁹ Descartes is being mentioned because his work raises a crucial consideration with regard to the mental-physical problem: Is the subjectiveness of mental/conscious states to be explained in physical-spatial terms? Though he proceeds to expound how essence and substance occur in different modes, this part of his work will not be dealt with here because it does not make any direct contribution to the present focus.

Secondly because Descartes posits that mental activities bring about causes and relations, he argues that how the ‘physical’ (i.e., the ‘sensible’, or ‘material’) environment is being interpreted depends on a subject’s intention. Subsequently, the ‘outside’ is a by-product of a subject’s consciousness. In *Heart of Darkness*, O’Prey notes that “Conrad pays great attention to the effects of light” (Conrad 7). The second paragraph of the novella describes the River Thames as follows:

The sea-reach of the Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway. In the offing* the sea and the sky were welded together without a joint, and in the luminous space the tanned sails of the barges drifting up with the tide seemed to stand still in red clusters [. . .] A haze rested on the low shores that ran out to sea in vanishing flatness. The air was dark above Gravesend, and farther back still seemed condensed into a mournful gloom, brooding motionless over the biggest, and the greatest, town on earth.

* *the offing*: a nautical term meaning the stretch of sea visible from the shore or from the anchorage.

(Conrad 27)

Although the above citation can yield various readings, this discussion will present only two. The first reading offers a ‘literal’ interpretation of the Thames and Gravesend. In the dark night, the river appears to be borderless and endless. Furthermore, a thick layer of fog hangs in the still air. In connection to the activities which occur along the Thames, Gravesend, a town that is located on the south bank of the river, thrives on the shipping-related trades. The second reading offers a ‘connotative’ interpretation of the river and

the town. The description “sea-reach” gives the impression that the Thames is tiresomely long. This tedious endlessness is exacerbated by the fact that “the sea and the sky [are] welded together without a joint”. Furthermore, the luminosity and stillness that shroud the Thames prompt the ominous. The “[“motionless”] haze [which rests] on the low shores that [run] out to the in vanishing flatness” heightens this “brooding” atmosphere. As a result of the immense darkness that has the Thames engulfed in a “mournful gloom”, the air that presides over the nearby town of Gravesend assumes a state of condensed staleness.

The two interpretations above demonstrate that the ability to interpret is in a way ‘immediate’ because the interpreter bears first-person authority. Hence, whilst the comprehension of how the “the tanned sails of the barges drifting up with the tide” (Conrad 27) is embalmed, or extended, by the spatial content that each word carries, the interpretability of the sentence ultimately depends on how a subject plans to read it. This is to say, while the mental impression of River Thames and Gravesend stems from how the words are being put together, the collective interpretation of these markers is ‘caused’ by a subject’s ability to ‘intend’ their meaning(s). Consequently, the physical world is an extension of the mental phenomenon. Therefore, the possibility of an experience is not limited by empirical cognition. In Conrad’s words, “The mind of man is capable of anything — because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future” (Conrad 69). This raises an important consideration with regard to the mental-physical problem: Can the subjectivity of the mental/conscious state be explained in physical/spatial terms?

Prior to offering an explanation as to how an experience may come about, the discussion first needs to outline its understanding and use of the marker, ‘space’. While it

will be difficult to detail the representations of space comprehensively, a general overview describes spatiality as some-thing that exists some-where. Whether, the notion of space is viewed as an integral part of a fundamental universal structure—a set of dimensions which locates things independently—or as part of an abstract conceptual framework—an ideal quantification of things—it is understood that these perspectives arise because of the contemplation, ‘what does it mean for something to be somewhere’.

The present discussion conceives ‘s-p-a-c-e’ as a medium through which ‘things’, regardless of whether material, or abstract, exist. This is to say, ‘space’ is neither strictly an ontological entity in itself nor a conceptual framework designed for the purpose of thinking about reality. Hence, ‘space’ contains both the spatiality of the physical and the spatialessness of the mental. Hence, the awareness of ‘how things are’ spans beyond the perceptibility of the observable. That is to say, the observation of things generates a perception, and not a fact. And so, the principle that anchors an experience of the observed must be undeterminateness: there is always a resistance against complete understanding of any thing.

The undetermined yields a probable assumption concerning the mental-physical problem. The interaction between the mental (e.g., the conscious) and physical (e.g., an experience of some thing) produces an observation (e.g., interpretation) that is neither extended nor located *within* the spatiality of space. After all, the observed is qualified by an ‘outsideness’ that cannot be contained by conceivable space. Of course, it must be noted that the exteriority mentioned here, nonetheless, is determined by the ‘insideness’ of a spatiality as well. So, to what end does such a postulation concerning exteriority and interiority serve in the study of interpretation?

A perspective concerning the perception/seeing/interpretation of material things: the undeterminateness accorded by exteriority enforces the likelihood that perception always exceeds the ability to perceive; and, the determinateness accorded by interiority sees that perceiving is always constrained within the ability of perception. Specifically, the interpretation of a thing/event/image depends largely on the way a subject represents it to him/herself. The subject is, mentally and physically speaking, a 'spatial being'. The framework that forms the basis of thought is built around a conceptual schema which is necessarily 'space-related'.

In order to elaborate on the above assertion, the discussion refers to *Heart of Darkness* again. Apart from the fact that the novella was first published at the height of Europe's colonisation of Africa (ca., 1900), the work presents a plot that relates an imperialist encounter. While the theme, colonialism, constructs the parameters of the work, this apparent coherence does not make *Heart of Darkness* a 'straightforward' text. This is because the narrative-in-*Heart of Darkness* sets up inter-narratives that constantly re-represent a widening diameter of meanings (i.e., narrative-in-itself at work). And so, "the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze" (Conrad 30). Alternatively, the interpretability of the novella can be perceived as not outside, but within an insideness that is sustained by a relentless re-un-folding.

Therefore, a subject's experience with *Heart of Darkness* is determined by the spatiality of the work itself—mental-physical space. If perception/seeing/interpretation is experienced within a pre-eminently spatial condition, perhaps, the guiding principle behind distinguishing 'this' and 'that' and 'x' and 'y' lays with the difference of space(s).

Hence, all things remaining equal, *x* and *y* are regarded as ‘*x*’ and ‘*y*’ just in so far as they are identified by a spatial difference. That is, a piece of work, for example *Heart of Darkness*, does not bear an interpretation. Rather, the effects of the interpretable are traceable from the ‘yet-to-be-said’.

For instance, the narrative of *Heart of Darkness* comes across as deliberately ambiguous (i.e., much is *to-be-said*). Though Marlow is the primary character and narrator of the novella, he is actually not the “I” who is relating the story. Taking into consideration that “I” only appears three times in the novella, its ‘presence’ is at best fleeting and obscure. As “I” directs the unfolding of *Heart of Darkness*, there exists a ‘some-where’ that does not belong to the literal context of the work. In the opening of the novella, “I” says, “Between us there was, as I have already said somewhere, the bond of the sea. Besides holding our hearts together through long periods of separation, it has the effect of making us tolerant of each other’s yarns – and even convictions” (Conrad 27). So, against the backdrop of the River Thames, “I” reports that Marlow has a story to tell. While “I” appears to be the author cum narrator of *Heart of Darkness*, this assumption is undermined by the fact that ‘I’ slips into ‘we’ at certain points. As a matter of fact, the ‘presence’ that is usually associated with authorship seems to be fleeting here because “I” is nearly as undifferentiated as the rest of the characters. By and large, they all speak through Marlow. An example of this is when Marlow includes in his speech the objections raised by the others as he relates his impression of travelling up river to find Kurtz. Marlow says,

Acquisitions, clothes, pretty rags – rags that would fly off at the first good shake. No; you want a deliberate belief. An appeal to me in this fiendish

row – is there? Very well; I hear; I admit, but I have a voice, too, and for good or evil is the speech that cannot be silenced. Of course, a fool, what with sheer fright and fine sentiment, is always safe. Who’s that grunting? You wonder I didn’t go ashore for a howl and a dance? Well no – I didn’t. Fine sentiments, you say? Fine sentiments, be hanged! I had no time.

(Conrad 69)

Though the narrative is shaped by those who are on board with Marlow as well as the presumably, omniscient “I”, each character does not possess an ‘identity’, which will justify the employment of the pronoun ‘I’. Thus, collective pronouns, including “us” and “our”, which continue to dot the novella, blur the distinction between the singular “I” and the plural “we”. Essentially, the example of “I” being undifferentiated from ‘the rest’ connotes the lack of ‘a voice’. This, in turn, points to the difficulty of locating a ‘presence’ within the work.

Because the work appears to be ‘slippery’ (i.e., it is not anchored by a ‘centre’), the interpretation of *Heart of Darkness* is marked by more and more possible readings. That is to say, an interpretation is constructed out of many other possible interpretations. The desire to determine an interpretation as ‘the interpretation’ is forestalled by a multiplicity which generates new possibilities and new relations ceaselessly. According to Mikhail Bakhtin, the multiple-ness of markers and their interaction is implicitly present in an idiom—heteroglossia. And, a marker bears meaning(s) in connection to other markers; a differentiality that positions it ‘within’ and ‘to’ them. Subsequently, the interpretation of a work is never present ‘in’ and ‘of’ itself. The interpretable becomes an interpretation within a plane that is constantly ‘othered’ by means of the deferring and

differing (i.e., \uparrow deference
difference).

Further, a register of differences presupposes locality and distinction. Therefore, the fundament of perception is based a structure that is artificially put in place so that concepts can interrelate by reference. Means of referencing include a network of markers, like symbols, metaphors and analogies. Subsequently, this contrivance foregrounds the yet-to-be-determinateness that has come to constitute this as ‘this’, that as ‘that’, x as ‘ x ’, and y as ‘ y ’. So, an understanding of how the un/determined points to a correlation between the mental/abstract and the physical/material. That is, the ‘yet-to-be’ underscores a conceptual framework that negotiates itself within the withoutness of ‘is’. Therefore, the mental/abstract is not merely reduced to the physical/material—as argued earlier on in this dissertation, the method of reduction makes little sense in the project since it seeks to interpret all things as unfolding in ‘in-itself’. Instead, the endeavour is to articulate a prospect of how the ‘mental’ and the ‘physical’ can systematically co-relate.

The Ability to See?

The objective of this sub-section, ‘The Ability to See?’, is to initiate a method of representing the relationship between space and perception/seeing/interpretation.

However, before the discussion embarks on its current task, it will be useful to first summarise the contents of the previous sub-section ‘What is there to See?’. Since spatial cognition can be derived via sense experience, the notion of ‘space’ is not purely ideal. But, because sensibility alone does not determine how space is constituted, the concept must be mediated by some ‘thing’ that lies beyond the seemingly comprehensible. That is, a subject’s experience and interpretation of a ‘real’ thing/event/image is the result of

an interaction between the senses and some 'thing'. This assertion results in at least two contradictions. Firstly, if all possible experiences are invariably tied to the senses in one way or another, how can all possible experiences not derive from the senses? Secondly, if something is beyond the senses, how can it be 'known' to begin with?

For the sake of an explanation, the discussion will like to assume momentarily that certain first principles must exist before any plausible experience becomes possible. As fundamental conditions that exist before any experience can be experienced, these presumed principles serve as presuppositions, which justify 'necessary truths'. In other words, a first principle enters into a presence, or become 'known', because both the rational (i.e., the sensible) and the arational (i.e., the insensible) contribute to how a subject experiences. And so, because an 'experience' emerges through them, the sensible and insensible, rational and arational, inside and outside contribute to the characterisation of the experiential.

For instance, if first principles are not accepted as 'just true', it will be impossible to interpret anything, including the relations between a subject and his/her immediate environment and concepts like truth and being. The assumption, every physical/material experience is foreshadowed by the mental/abstract phenomena, extrapolates that the interpretation is a by-product of an exteriority that is located within the interpretable itself. That is to say, the acceptance of first principles as 'undeniable truths' makes it possible to see the conditions of possible (empirical) experience as the very conditions for experiencing that particular occurrence. Consequently, the experience of perceiving/seeing/interpreting of all things/events/images is subjected to a single

doubleness. This duality refers to the spatiality of sensible and the spatialessness of the ideal.

An anecdote will help illustrate the point to be made here. Imagine it is a Monday morning. K is fast asleep until the alarm clock goes off at the stipulated time. Reluctantly, he drags himself out of bed. Upon rolling up the blinds, he notices that the sky is grey. His dread of the sluggish day ahead is interrupted by a soft ‘meow’. After giving Meatball its breakfast and setting the kettle to boil, K goes through the motion of getting dressed for another typical workday. The activities that K experiences in his bedroom reflects a collective experience concerning facing up to yet another brand new work week: it is going to be a tough five days ahead. In alphabetical order, the above sequence translates as scenario ‘a’ (i.e., K’s asleep is disrupted by the alarm), followed by scenario ‘b’ (i.e., K gets out of bed), followed by scenario ‘c’ (i.e., K notices the grey skies), and so forth. Although the example illustrates that an experience is made up of a series of events, more importantly, it highlights the possibility that a subject is ‘made by’ his/her experiences.

Consider this proposition: Because a subject is only a mediator between thing/event/image-it-self and perception/seeing/interpretation-in-itself, s/he does not possess full autonomy when it comes to assigning possibilities to experiences. That is, being more of a ‘medium’ via which the observed is ‘digested’ followed by ‘read’, a subject is the subject of (possible) experience-in-itself. Although possible experiences must somehow be pieced together at one point of time or another—otherwise, $a, b, c \dots n_{\infty}$ will not connect to convey a meaning—the question is, how is this task to be accomplished? Could the missing link that associates ‘a’ with ‘b’, ‘b’ with ‘c’, ‘c’ with . .

. n_{∞} be undeterminable: a no-thing? After all, a subject owns limited prerogative over how an experience is to be interpreted, and any other ‘thing’ cannot preside over the flow of experience. Perhaps, then, the ‘missing’ is that which sustains the gap, as well as associate ‘a’, ‘b’, ‘c’ . . . and n_{∞} . This ‘lack’ is that which sees to the assembly of perception/seeing/interpretation of things/events/images in itself.

The argument asserts that experience and its becoming are not dependent on an ‘entity’. Therefore there is no ‘centre’ from which a web of relations can emerge. Since, perception/seeing/interpretation does not appear perceivable because of a privileged ‘Something’, the discourse is free from being read as some ‘thing’. Essentially, this freedom points to ‘nothing’, or a ‘no-thing’. Thus, when experience is independent of either this or that *logos*-centric principle, the focus is turned to the thing-in-itself. A return to the study of experience-in-experience, the representation of the observable is situated within the spatiality of its individuated excesses. Then, in place of trying to arrive at conditions that seem to favour interpretation, central to this discussion is how the interpretable is produced as an effect of the interpretative.

In the context of the current argument, the presence that presents experience is not reducible to a subject’s seeing and reading of a projected appearance. Although the perceivable is, to a certain extent, governed by a set of conditions, the interpretation of it remains ‘unregulated’. That is, experience is ascertained by a temporality which is always in the process of being re-represented. Alternatively, this repeating representation can be thought of as a *re-present-ing* because there can be no presentation to begin with. So, the perceptual interpretation or experience of watching the Stone Temple Pilots play at a concert, flipping through an old photograph album, or reading a novel is an intrinsic

event-in-itself. The actualising of an experience is constantly negated within a spatiality that is characterised by a matrix of successive moments. A determination that is renewable again and again, the potentialities generated by the question, 'how to see', are enabled by the yet-to-be-fixed, an orderly disorder of events and a spatiality of a-unity. Hence, from the constitution of this or that perception/seeing/interpretation, there can only be a plane of diverging divergences. How this liberation comes about will be the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter Three: *Thinking about the Nature of Meaning-making*

The concept of less-ness bears prominence in Chapter One and Two. This ‘lessness-ness’ charts a diversity of possibilities that is manifested through a host of functions, including the ‘trans-temporal’, ‘pure’, ‘differential’, ‘repeatable’, ‘divergent’ and ‘no-thing’. While less-ness presupposes the always-lacking, which encourages momentary passing of compositions that are neither localised nor determined, it cannot be deemed ‘arbitrary’. This is because the no-thing yields a framework, a some-thing, that facilitates the (trans)passing of the interpretable (i.e., meaning-making that is orientated by conditions relating to ‘how to see’, ‘what is there to see’ and ‘the ability to see’). As such, less-ness extends a ‘liberty’ which points towards ‘openness’, where every possible interpretation is equally possible given the appropriate circumstance. Ultimately, this freedom (or a ‘lack’) legitimises interpretation and its self-regulation. Before the discussion proceeds to explicate this hypothesis, it will be useful to first consider the bases that are associated with the development of it. Only then, will it make sense to propose a link between the concept of less-ness and that of meaning-making in the present context.

The task at hand prompts a question. What role does the ‘lacking’ play in a discussion concerning knowledge, existence and interpretation? For a start, the non-presence of the ‘lack’ interrogates the possibility of presenting a present. The presence-ness of the present is thought of as the fundamental trait that gives the observable its (re)presentability (e.g., identity). For instance, geometrical shapes bounded by three straight lines, which contain angles that add up to 180-degrees, are collectively defined as

‘triangles’. Thus, the mention of ‘equilateral’ or ‘isosceles’ refers to ‘triangle’ while ‘hexagon’ and ‘heptagon’ do not. As such, things are grouped with accordance to how they resemble each other and the common features they share.

According to arguments that are *logos*-centric in essence, the presence of a present x presents x as ‘ x ’. But, this discussion puts forward that it is the presence of a non-present—the lacking—which produces attributes of x . Of the latter, because x is undeterminable, it will be fair to state that x is ‘ x ’ only when x is indeed ‘ x ’. The perpetual making of x points to a potential for varying, creating and producing xs beyond all possible knowable xs . That is, x cannot be reduced to the present-ness of an ‘is’ because it is always yet-to-be-articulated, which leads to an overabundance. For instance, it is not the law of vectors that defines a plane as a ‘triangle’, or ‘polygon’. Rather, it is the application of the law of vectors that creates a ‘triangle’, which has three intersecting lines, or ‘polygon’, which has four intersecting lines. Therefore, it is the process of applying ‘ x ’ to x that momentarily morphs x into ‘ x ’. Also, the dynamism involved in the recourse of accounting for x points to a making that is exclusively inherent, within and immanent to x .

Since x cannot be determined by characteristics that are dogmatically imposed (e.g., through categorisation), what is the justification for construing that x becomes x via its own unfolding? Moreover, the idea that ‘process’ makes some thing a ‘thing’ seems to steer the argument right back to a position that is reminiscent of *logos*-centricism. The order of a process is still an ‘order’ in spite of its dynamism.

For the purpose of studying how x can be interpreted as x , the discussion will now develop the notion of ‘diverging divergences’. Furthermore, the divergency spoken about

here bears intimate correlation with another concept that is central to the thesis of this paper: that of multiplicity. In context of the premises being put up here, a brief but appropriate explanation of what ‘multiplicity’ may reference highlights concepts, including ‘decentredness’, ‘displacement’ and ‘differentiality’. The heterogeneity that marks the workings of these functions connotes a spontaneity, a many-ness, that privileges the indeterminate, incomplete and infinite. And, structures of fresh possibilities refold into a space that is opened up by the many, which unfold within a multiplicity of multiplicities.

The multiple-ness of multiplicity appears to display two distinct characteristics: ‘varying possibilities’ and ‘absent presence’. However, prior to examining these features in detail, what can the multiple-ness of multiplicity come to mean? Especially, when the concept can neither be reduced to a specific sense of coherence, nor be explained via conventional wisdom instituted by markers, such as ‘many’, ‘variety’ and ‘assortment’. While it may be difficult to pinpoint what multiplicity ‘is’, a study of how it functions will help to establish its relevance to the task of making meaning. In order to demonstrate how multiplicity relates (within) itself, a case study involving material objects and physical processes follows.

For instance, the movements of a hobby horse are limited to two motions: that of forward and backward. And, the momentum of these movements is dependent on the force which its rider applies to the object. Accordingly, the dynamical behaviour of a hobby horse could be summarised as, ‘two-dimensional’. The movements of a model aeroplane, on the other hand, far exceed that of a hobby horse. Considering all the mobile parts, including propellers, wheels and engine, a model aeroplane is capable of displaying

at least six different combinations of movement and momentum (i.e., forward and backward, fast and slow). Therefore, two dimensions are required to see the possible potential which a hobby horse can yield, and six-dimensions⁴⁰ are required to see the possible potential which a model aeroplane can yield.

Be it the movement and momentum of the hobby horse or model aeroplane, spatial dimensionality, which facilitates ‘what could happen to an object’, underscores a range of free play—there is freedom to ‘be’ *within* a designated scope. So, spatiality captures all possibilities of a single possibility. And of this very singularity-in-itself, belies a multiplicity of multiplicities. That is to say, the process of something taking place achieves instantaneity regardless of how simple or complex is the transition. In the case of a model aeroplane, it has the potential to exhibit six dimensions in spite of it being endowed three-dimensional capabilities (i.e., given the appropriate circumstance, six different occurrences can recur within a spatiality of three dimensions). Obviously, the potentiality/possibilities/spatiality that a model aeroplane possesses is far greater than its observable material/physical attributes. But what compresses a multiplicity of possibles into a concurrent occurrence?

The multiple-ness of the singular, as described by this discussion, is marked as infinite. Moreover, the lineage of this single infinity encompasses the ‘structure’ that yields a multitude of possibilities to come. This deliberately simplistic assertion puts across a salient point that states ‘singularity opens up multiplicity’. Nevertheless, in spite of being borne out a singularity, the many-ness of multiplicity cannot be reduced to a specificity, or singleness. To make sense of this premise, an interpretation must be

⁴⁰ A six-way combination comprising of 1) forward-backward; 2) forward-fast; 3) forward-slow; 4) backward-fast; 5) backward-slow; and 6) fast-slow.

thought of as a ‘fold’ that just ‘happens’ to ‘be’ in between the successions of interpretable thing/event/image. As such, an interpretation is not the product of a thing/event/image determined as that exact thing/event/image. Because the realisation of an interpretable is ‘actualised’ within an unfolding (as oppose to ‘exacting’), connectives and syntheses set the divergence of a converging multiplicity into perpetual motion.

Further, the impact of every other point of interpretable thing/event onto every other point of interpretable thing/event leads to a multiple-ness of new connections that resist affirmation. The steady resistance against being determined presupposes the perpetual need for an all-new way of interpreting any thing. It is a peculiar construction whereby the building blocks of interpretation stay necessarily unconstructed. Thus, the interpretability of a thing/event/image depends on how independent points of reference mitigate, negotiate and inter-relate under a condition that must remain condition-less. As a result, the description of an occurrence (i.e., ‘what has happened’) cannot be completed, attributed and distinguished. Thus, a thing/event is always in a state of being described (i.e., ‘to be’). And, the ‘lacking’ that secures the undeterminateness of any occurrence gathers in a momentum which forms a continuous (immanent) space. In this void of the ‘unsaid’, which is essentially uncompletable, unattributable and undistinguishable, becoming becomes in a state of ever be-come-ing (i.e., —*ing*).

The process of making meaning, when implicated by multiple-less-ness, is, then, not an end of itself. Rather, the multifariousness of multiplicity charts facetious means for thinking about how things/events piece together. When considering the congruency of all occurrences, the meeting of many-fold within a fold articulates a continuum that brings together differencing and repeating. While the chapter, *Thinking about the Nature*

of *Perception*, outlines an interpretation of ‘difference’ and ‘repetition’ that concurs with the premises of this discussion, it is currently necessary to speak more about these concepts.

The dynamical process which occurs in an unfolding multiplicity is characterised by simultaneous relations that are differential and repetitive. An illustration will help to elucidate this proposition. From the time of implantation, an embryo alters to take the human shape over the course of approximately nine months. During this period, the once formless oocyte gestates to develop life supporting organs, functions and tissues. Despite the pretext that a fertilised oocyte carries with it pre-coded genetic data, its proliferation, nonetheless, depends on how the bundle of nuclei morph. In other words, what becomes of an embryo depends on how its germ layers repeatedly differentiate. So, even though the oocyte is a template inscribed with certain biochemical strains, the information it contains does not yield a straightforward end result. In a way, the distinctive inherent state, which an oocyte is thought to possess, represents the potential to refract a host of possible states. Hence, within the single-ness of the homogeneous, the multiple-ness of heterogeneity negotiates itself.

Subsequently, the exchange between the singular and the plural accords a space that unfolds within a refolding folding⁴¹. More specifically, the (reun)fold(ing) is defined by a plane that is comprised of two kinds of ‘spatialities’, namely, the ‘intangible’, or ‘tangible’. Given the excess that they produce, space can be interpreted as structures of

⁴¹ The idea owes itself to Deleuze notion of “the fold”. He comments that “differentiation does not refer to a pre-given undifferentiated, but to a Difference that endlessly unfolds and folds from each of its two sides, and that unfolds the one only one while refolding the other [. . .] a severing by which each term casts the other forwards, a tension by which each fold is pulled into the other” (Deleuze, *The Fold* 30).

possibilities then. Being a collective structure-in-itself, the in/tangible space is a multiplicity (i.e., many-fold), a centrefold, of all possible becoming possibilities.

Hence, all reproducible occurrences that take place within an intangible space can be accounted for. Since ‘how a thing/event happens’ is explainable and determinable, conditions that lead to a ‘happening’ can be ‘laid out’. Therefore, the intangibility that exerts an influence over both material and mental substances can be ‘known’. This comprehensibility indicates that every thing exists immanently (i.e., there is neither an ‘outside’ nor a ‘beyond’). Thus, the intangible is actualised within a state of tangibility, which denotes a third ‘version’ of space. The present discussion calls this immanent space the ‘in/tangible’.

An assumption stands firm when explaining what in/tangibility may come to constitute. That is, one and all intangible and tangible are already present within the in/tangible itself. For instance, though the tangibility of an intangible space is thought to be ‘not real’, the space that subsumes it is considered ‘real’ (i.e., the tangible aspect of in/tangibility). Subsequently, the realness of the unreal unfolds within a (re)production of the multiplicable, whereby a spontaneous unfolding of difference gains momentum through a folding repetition. A force that inhabits a phenomena—(difference-repetition)/(in/tangibility)—the (re)unfolding composes a rupture of occurrences, or actualities, that points to a be-come-*ing* of no particular end. In short, the dynamism of the in/tangible is in perpetual negotiation with itself: the possibility to become is predicated of a be-come-*ing* that is repeatedly the same (c.f., the gestation of an occyte).

As becoming is always waiting to become, the absent must play a primary role in the actualisation of (difference-repetition)/(in/tangibility). An unfolding that finds

affirmation within an entire oeuvre of spontaneity, temporary ‘actuals’ coalesce to produce a seamless and ceaseless metamorphosis. Nevertheless, can the ‘actual’ and the ‘spontaneous’ relate when they each bring to mind polemic concepts? That is, an actual is already a possible prior to its actualisation, while the spontaneous is predisposed to the possibility of a possibility. The thesis at hand posits an actualising that renews itself consistently since the spontaneous can never be fully present(ed). Indirectly, this hypothesis disregards the artificial dichotomy between the ‘actual’ and ‘spontaneous’.

To make sense of the tangibility of (difference-repetition)/(in/tangibility), the actual and the spontaneous must be regarded as two mutually distinctive, and yet enjoined, entities of that which ‘becomes’. In turn, this assumption helps to characterise, as well as co-relate three elements associated with the ‘possible’, namely, multiplicity, becoming and the absent.

Explicitly, the actual/becomes refers to the ‘real’ occurrence of an event. For instance, white appears to be the fundamental colour of light. However, passing white light through a prism refracts seven colours. And, directing these other colours through individual prisms refract yet another respective set of seven colours⁴². Therefore, via a medium, in this case, a prism, white light ‘reveals’ the spectrum of colours that composes it. If white light is produced by combining the visible colours of light in equal amounts, then, a mixture of imbalance proportions will result in various hues. So, when the brightness of a particular colour, say, green, increases in intensity, the end-product will immediately change to become more ‘greenish’ (e.g., more ‘cyan’ than ‘gold’). As such,

⁴² An experiment carried out by Isaac Newton.

the increase and/or decrease in hue, saturation and/or brightness produce a differentiated colour effect.

Although the above example does not describe the ‘becoming’ of a colour in a material sense, like water solidifying into ice, or evaporating into steam, it shows that a singular event (i.e., a ‘fold’) occurs in between a multiple (i.e., many-fold) of possible events. Thus, the singularities that constitute the multiple-ness of a multiplicity exhibit the potential of carrying on as an infinite series. The differencing of this repeatable in/tangibility points to an uninhabited aspect of the (un)realisable. That is, a spontaneous be-come-*ing*.

Implicitly, the spontaneity of the be-come-*ing* refers to the ‘incorporeal’ occurrence of an event. A present that is neither ‘here’ nor ‘there’, the ‘absent’ brings about an actualising which stops short of identifying with its own actualisation. For instance, the colour blue is apparent only because it is a ‘passing’ that underscores its constitution. Characteristic of a metamorphosis (i.e., the production of events), be-come-*ing* is a spontaneous differencing that is constantly in the process of being further differentiated and (re)affirmed. Subsequently, in context of the current discussion, the force, which mediates between thing/event/image-it-self and perception/seeing/interpretation-in-itself, is best understood as an ability ‘to create’. An experimentation that leads to a continuous unfolding, the becoming of this creativity may be expressed as follows: actual/becomes ∞ spontaneous/be-come-*ing* ∞ actual/becomes ∞ spontaneous/be-come-*ing* . . . —*ing*. So, the actualising of a thing/event/image-in-itself does not pass from actualisation to actualisation. Instead of one actual/becomes

succeeding another, the actualising of the spontaneous/be-come-ing expands within a returning field of dynamic trans-formation.

The transverse-ness⁴³ of be-come-ing situates the manifestation of (difference-repetition)/(in/tangibility) within an —ing that persistently re/un/folds. Nevertheless, this event of becoming does not purposely work towards the realising of be-come-ing and its diverse multiple-ness. Capitalising on the shifting presence of that is ‘to come’, the spontaneity of an actual becoming privileges the active and generative. Therefore, this spontaneous be-coming is regarded as an immediacy that lacks immediateness. After all, if becoming is understood either as difference over a discourse of repeatable in/tangibility, or difference of repeatable in/tangibility, be-come-ing will be reduced to no more than an unvarying variation between point to point (e.g., the gap between x_2 and x_3 is the same as the gap between x_3 and x_4 ; on both accounts the repeating difference is the same).

For instance, there must be a basis if Deleuze is to be compared to Derrida. Otherwise, it will not be possible to observe, contrast and/or deduce the differences and/or similarities that emerge from their trajectories. However, commentaries, such as Deleuze being a philosopher of “duality”, “positivity” and “self -interrogation” and Derrida being a philosopher of “unity”, “negativity” and “interrogation by another” (Lawlor 67), merely approximate how both of them are different and/or the same. These distinctions, including ‘how Deleuze is like Derrida’ and ‘how Deleuze is unlike

⁴³ Guattari deploys the concept of ‘transversality’ in a conference paper (1964). But, in terms of this discussion, Deleuze’s application of the marker seems more relevant. Briefly, the latter perceives transversality as an antithesis to *logos*. Departing from the Platonic Ideal of wanting to arrive at an Origin, the transverse promoted the assembling and unification of heterogeneity. Deleuze says, “But the whole problem is to know on what [. . .] formal structure rests, and how it gives the parts and the style a unity which they would not have without it [. . .] the importance of a *transversal dimension* [. . .]: transversality” (Deleuze, *Proust* 149).

Derrida', eventually result in templates of rigid categories, which are used for drawing conclusions. If be-come-ing was to be framed by such a structure, it would be represented by a cohesive present that presents its presence. But, the arguments that the discussion puts forward clearly run contrary to the notion of 'wholesomeness'. Conceived of in terms of 'becoming-in-itself', the occurrence of a particular event is all at once singular, momentary and end-less. In short, an occurrence is a heterogeneous passing between events.

The transitoriness of be-come-*ing* frees the becoming of some 'thing' from becoming 'something'. In other words, becoming-in-itself sidelines the concept of representation in favour of describing the circumstances that lead to its liberal production. The focus of be-come-*ing* being the ever differing and deferring of some 'thing' as a 'thing', it engages with a (quasi)specificity that defies generalisation. A 'here' and a 'now' that pass on again and again to yet another, and another, 'here' and 'now', the experience of a thing-in-itself is a composition of be-coming(s) re-presented by the re/un/fold—*ing*.

However, the be-coming of —*ing* is not a perpetuation that merely culminates into a heterogeneous surplus. A re-presentation that could be described as representations that are always deferrentiated, its multiple-ness is affirmed by the vigour of a differentiated heterosis. That is to say, be-com-*ing* is not just the re-presentation of —*ing*. The be-coming is the re-presentation of a hybridity that expresses be-come-ing itself. That is, —*ing*-in-itself. Therefore, within the plane of multiplicative —*ing*, becoming passes on and becomes. Nonetheless, this argument, just like any other, is contestable, especially when the discussion seems to be drawing a synonymy between becoming and

endless-ness. To put it simply, how can the becoming, become? While becoming connotes the ephemerality of be-ing, the verb 'be' points to an 'actuality' that is reminiscent of being (i.e., 'fundament', 'unchanging' and 'fixed').

That is, the be(-)ing of becoming is the very manifestation of be-com-*ing*. For instance, the passing of an event, 'x', does not take place 'outside' of its occurrence. Because x happens within x-itself, the point-to-point metamorphosis, like from x_2 to x_3 to $x_4 \dots$, is the re/un/folding of an actualise-ing actualisation; a continuum that must be accentuated by the unactualised. In other words, actualisation requires that actualising not only actualises itself in a representation, but is also of the very re-presentation which is always yet-to-be-actualised. Hence, the present thesis postulates that the being of becoming is be-come-ing (within) itself. This refolding and unfolding of a folding (i.e., —*ing*) culminate as an actualisation of a fold. In light of an ever be-coming, how is meaning making characterised?

Central to making meaning is a representability (i.e., of every thing/event/image that is interpretable) that resists all appropriations of representation. However, because meaning making is representable (i.e., the interpretability of every thing/event/image) that which can be represented is re-presentable. Further, this representability is grounded within an immanent assembling, effecting and unfolding of the presentable. This assumption is based on the present-ness of a 'present' that perpetuates a space for all other 'presents' to come. However, the presentation of the present hinges upon an un-present(able) that supplements the present(able). Hence, meaning-making enters into a plane of present relations that are constituted by the to-be-present. To affirm a nature of meaning-making is to affirm lessness-ness, then. That is, the intention to make meaning

trespasses beyond a present representation/interpretation. Whatever interpretable thing/event/image, there is undoubtedly more and more possible representations/interpretations yet to come.

Subsequently, the mutability of lessness-ness subverts the dogmatism of representation⁴⁴. Although, ‘representation’ has been intermittently discussed throughout the three chapters, it is necessary to restudy the concept once more. Representation appears to be a blueprint for experiencing the phenomena. If representation is governed by the principle, *logos*, its framework must be marked by ‘stability’, ‘presentness’ and ‘fixity’. And, if the wholeness of a *logos*-centric representation is to be interpreted, the means for conceiving ‘what is out there’ must be in place. As such, meaning-making is an activity that consists of (artificially) establishing what different symbols/markers can represent. For instance, the represented is a representation of what a subject perceives, thinks and interprets how the phenomenon ‘is’. Thus, a template, like a social, political or economic infrastructure, accords the interpretation of how things must be.

As an alternative to a representation that is *logos* centric, the concept of lessness posits a ‘lacking’ that persists in presenting temporary representings; the re-present-ings of meanings upon all interpretable thing/event/image. If it is possible to note down the intention of lessness-ness, it must be thought of as an instrument for diagnosing the symptoms of meaning-making.

Obviously, lessness is not yet another concept designed to apprehend the nature, or essence, of interpretation. After all, the marker ‘less(ness)’ is employed to signify the ‘no-thing’ which ensures the return of an overabundant re-representation. Whilst the

⁴⁴ Deleuze talks about the ‘dogmatic image of thought’ in *Difference and Repetition* and *A Thousand Plateaus* (with Guattari).

actualisation of the repeatable difference is marked as the perceivable ‘thing’, the virtualness of this repeating return is marked as the yet-to-be-perceived ‘no-thing’. So, lessness is the single plurality that encompasses the renewing possibility of every repeatable differentiability-in-itself within an immanence. Hence, the interpretable produces an excess. And, this ‘more than’ is beyond what ‘representation’ can designate.

How an oocyte behaves illustrates the actualisation of virtual lessness-ness. Typically, each nucleus found in an oocyte contains 23 pairs of chromosomes. Although the respective pairings possess unique genetic qualities, they are by no means independent of one another. Collectively, the chromosomes unify to realise their virtuality by exhibiting concrete characteristics. However, because they interact perpetually and momentarily, a field of variables is generated. As such, what becomes of a nucleus is not predetermined. That is to say, the genetic becoming of an oocyte is not ‘fixed’. Thus, the be-come-ing of the oocyte is a re/un/folding that actualises the genetic permutations of an open virtuality.

Similarly, there is always a surplus when it comes to conceiving and perceiving how meaning makes. This is because the interpretative is indebted to an absence that is constituted by lessness-ness. And so, the act of interpreting must be deemed as a making that lies outside of a particular present presence. In short, the interpretable recurs as an inexhaustible becoming that possesses the freedom to create within a plane of creativity. Since the creative gravitates towards the experimental, its being—or, be-ing—liberates itself from determined as an ‘itself’. In other words, the realisation of an actual does not curb the virtualness of the possible multiplicity of multiplicities. That is, the actual is an actualising deference and difference that presents itself as actualise/d within the one

moment. So, the expression of a meaning remains 'open-ended' even though it is expressed within a specificity. Presented by a no-thing, meaning-making embraces a 'more than' that points to an evolutionary be-come-*ing*. A continual passing that becomes after be-coming, the negation that be-*ing* produces a one-ness that can only be attributable to a singular plural being: No-thing-ness.

SECTION TWO—*Interpretations*

As a whole, Section Two seeks to demonstrate textual openness. By reading specific texts, the present endeavour is an attempt to map out the relationship between the ‘yet-to-be-determined’ and hermeneutics. That is, interpretation is not located ‘in’ a text because the process is driven forth by a multiplicity of instabilities and potentialities, which are inherent of meaning-making. Hence, this discussion adopts a poststructuralist viewpoint, which purports that all interpretations are textual and inter-textual as there can be no outside of a text (Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 1982). Moreover, since interpretation is marked by a surplus of interpretations, the result of this polysemy is an inter-play of differentiations, deferentiations and displacements. The present thesis posits the inter-play (and, perhaps, intra-play) of texts as ‘hyper-textual’. That is, a text is inter-connected (as well as intra-connected) to other texts that exist within itself.

The following salient points accompany the concept of hyper-textuality. First, the hyper-textual resists *logos*-centrism. Second, the hyperactive nature of texts highlights the undeterminateness that accompanies meaning-making. If such a strategy is to be sustained, then, it has to steadily refute structured analysis. Otherwise, interpretation will be subjected to the ‘determinable’. In this case, the “validity” that E. D. Hirsch Jr. hopes to achieve with the interpretative will not apply. He purports that “the activity of interpretation can lay claim to intellectual respectability only if its results can lay claim to validity” (Hirsch 164). To achieve this validation, “the interpreter’s primary task is to reproduce in himself the author’s ‘logic’, his attitudes, his cultural givens, in short, his world. Even though the process of verification is highly complex and difficult, the

ultimate verificative principle is very simple—the imaginative reconstruction of the speaking subject” (242). So Hirsch thinks that the validity of an interpretation is dependent on whether the reading concurs with the author’s intention (or, how accurately a reading reproduces the specific meaning(s) as intended by the author).

However, as an interpretation emerges from a network of possible interpretations, the organising rationale behind this continuous shifting points to an infinite ‘decentreableness’. In other words, the hyper-ness of a text, which gives rise to interpretation(s), is not facilitated by a primary axis of reference—an interpretation takes shape in spite of an absent centre. To a large extent, interpretation is a ‘linear’ process. For instance, three markers, ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ cannot be read all at once. Regardless of the order in which a subject decides to read, for example, A-B-C, A-C-B, B-C-A, C-A-B, or C-B-A, an interpretation of what these combinations of markers can come to mean still requires a singular focus. Therefore, while a subject perceives/sees ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ all at once, the interpretation of these markers is dependent on the sequence which s/he chooses to read them in.

Consequently, there are two different interpretations altogether. First, there is the interpretation of markers, such as ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’. Second, there is the interpretation of texts, like A-B-C, A-C-B and B-C-A. As such, there are two levels of interpretables: that of a marker and that of a text. Furthermore, this interpretability is enabled by a system of differences. For instance, Ferdinand de Saussure conveys how this system functions in *Course in General Linguistics*, a compilation by [Charles Bally](#) and [Albert Sechehaye](#) that is based on notes taken from lectures which the former had given at the University of Geneva. Saussure argues that the meaning that a marker/sign bears is in direct relation to

the other makers/signs which exist within the same system. As such, A is 'A' for two reasons. Firstly, because it is not B and secondly, it is othered by B. Therefore, 'A' is not 'B' because 'A' is neither written nor read as 'B'. Nevertheless, this does not mean that 'A' cannot take on the interpretation that has been artificially assigned to 'B'⁴⁵.

Subsequently, the undeterminateness of an interpretation is heightened by the arbitrariness that helps correlate a particular marker/sign with a particular signification.

Thus, hyper-textuality is not a methodology that explains 'how interpretation functions'. Rather, it is a meta-interpretation that studies the passings which are closely tied to the re-representability and re-reinterpretability of texts. This assertion is based on the assumption that an interpretation is subjected to an infinite reciprocity between repetition and difference. And since the reading of any one text is undeterminable, there can never be a conclusive interpretation of it. In context of this thesis, an interpretable is subjected to an infinite differing and deferring of folds.

Specifically, the concept of 'folding'⁴⁶ encourages the production of possibilities. This unfolding of folds/possibilities points to the effect of folds/possibilities within folds/possibilities themselves. In light of the present discussion, this translates into the relation of interpretations to interpretations-in-themselves. Hence, the fold is really an inward unfolding of that which remains undeterminable (i.e., the 'outside'). The hyper-ness of the text is produced by the decentrability of the text-in-itself. Generally, a

⁴⁵ It is sustainable to argue that an interpretation is determined by a context (e.g., an idiom authorship and socio-politics). The problem is, if interpretation is indeed context-bound, context is, however, 'boundless' That is, there is no way of determining what context 'is' since it shifts from contexts to contexts (c.f., moment-to-moment momentariness).

⁴⁶ The notion of the 'fold' is central to Deleuze's work. He applies it especially to his reading of Leibniz and Foucault.

refolding is a possible that unfolds within a space which continuously folds into and onto another and another . . . possibility.

As every possibility is perpetuated and propelled by the ‘ever to come’, the constitution of inter-interpretations is produced by a force that diversifies (i.e., differentiation through repetition). A passing on of some ‘thing’ happening again and again, this eternal re-constitution of interpretation, through its own repeatability, suggests a becoming that will always be-coming. In sum, the relationalness that becoming creates provides hyper-textuality with its evolutionary form, where possibilities multiply and proliferate. With neither a beginning nor an end point, the sets of in-between differences and repetitions entail a continuum that is unified in the very be-coming of the becoming.

Against this backdrop of multiplicity, interpretation is continually driven by the affectiveness of a hyperality. A hyper-ness that produces more and more potential readings, these ‘layers’ of possibilities provoke a host of challenges which exacerbate the fundamental difficulties raised by the interpretative. These include the problematics involving perception, the concept of the image and the function of the sense⁴⁷. According to Bergson, hyperality’s “artificial obscurity” serves no purpose other than to create “fictitious problems” when attempting to penetrate the “inner meaning” of a text (*Matter* 15-16).

The following three chapters seek to demonstrate the abovementioned ‘artifice’, which hyper-textuality introduces into a text. It will be useful to note that instead of explicating theses which specific theorists purport, the following chapters will focus on the investigation of specific themes. The reason for this strategy is two-fold. Firstly, the

⁴⁷ Section one of this dissertation identifies as well as explicates some of these basic problems.

discussion wishes to outline some of the fundamental concepts that are associated with the topic of meaning making. Secondly, it is always contestable as to why the perspective offered by one theorist is privileged over another. Therefore, the discussion employs explicit references, like referring to a specific piece of work, or theorist, solely for the purpose of describing the problematics that are associated with interpretation. This strategy aims to describe the ‘being’ of interpretation so that an exposition of its ‘becoming’ can be delivered.

In Chapter Four, the discussion studies Deleuze’s interpretation of Marcel Proust’s *Remembrance of Things Past* (1981). The chapter makes specific references to *Proust and Signs*, whereby Deleuze performs an in-depth, albeit, selective, analysis of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The intention to interpret Deleuze’s reading of *Remembrance of Things Past* is in effect an example of how interpretation produces layers of (hyper)texts via the unfolding of repeatable differences. Of course, apart from providing an instance of what interpretation does, making the choice to close-read Deleuze and his concepts serves other objectives as well. For one, the theses that Deleuze purports have clear relevance to the present endeavour. Particularly significant to this study of hypertextuality is his explication of how a text is a difference that unfolds within its own repeatable difference. Moreover, apart from ‘difference’, ‘repetition’, ‘unfolding’ and ‘inter-interpretations’, Deleuze’s choice to examine *Remembrance of Things Past* affords an understanding of the complex interrelations between ‘time’ and ‘space’, which are the focuses of the following two respective chapters.

In Chapter Five, *An Interpretation of Interpretations of Time*, the discussion concerning ‘time’ offers a perspective on the production of multiple interpretations under

the condition of a singular past-present-future: the temporalisation of texts. This interpretation of time explores the meaning of time in the context of ontological thought. That is, under the mediation of infinite time, the interpretable is represented by a continuum, where (re)interpretation(s) itself acquires a force of becoming: the hyperality of inter-textualness. As such, within the variability of a single time, inter-textuality and its many-folds unify in a single multiplicity. Because this chapter is about the ways in which the notion of time can be interpreted, its choice of theoretical propositions offered by various philosophers and theorists is necessarily selective. Furthermore, the respective interpretation that each of them posit will be dealt with in brief. That is, arguments targeted for inclusion elaborate on the correlation between the concept of ‘time’ and ‘a-thing-in-itself. The question is, is it possible for x to become different and yet remain as ‘ x ’?

Subsequently, the temporality that produces inter-interpretations presents an extension that constitutes the realisation of ‘space’. Therefore, Chapter Six, *An Interpretation of Interpretations of Space*, offers a perspective on how interpretations are ‘constructions’ that occur within time. This conjecture, in turn, contributes to a conception of ‘space’. The inter-textuality of this structure (i.e., layers upon layers of interpretations) is created by the moment-within-moment encounters between hyper-foldings. Hence, the incessant passing from interpretations to interpretations opens up a terrain that is tantamount to ‘infinity’: the boundless refolding within the boundary of a fold. Similar to Chapter Five, which examines the concept of ‘time’, the discussion on the idea of ‘space’ includes a selection of works that will contribute to an explication of how interpretation can take place. That is, x becomes ‘ x ’, which refers to a becoming of itself.

In this light, the act of interpretation is dynamic and non-eventual not only on the level of the interpretable, but also on that of interpretability. This is why, in the present discussion, the decentredness of ‘becoming’, ‘difference’ and ‘repetition’ is deployed to describe the hypertextual nature of hermeneutics. At the same time, this implies that interpretation is made possible by the ‘absent’: a nothing. That is, the relations of an interpretation to other interpretations exist within a presentness that is naturally evasive: a no-thing. According to Deleuze (and Guattari), the hyperality of ‘no-thingness’ is self-referential; it materialises through its own heterogeneous homogeneity. Of this immanent plane, he says,

Every movement passes through the whole of the plane by immediately turning back on and folding itself and also by folding other movements or allowing itself to be folded by them, giving rise to retroactions, connections, and proliferations in the fractualisation of this infinitely folded up infinity (variable curvature of the plane) [. . .] the plane of immanence is always single, being itself [a] pure variation [. . .] upon which infinite movements are retained and selected, succeed and contest each other [. . .]

(Deleuze and Guattari, *Philosophy?* 38-39)

Chapter Four: An Interpretation of Deleuze Reading Proust

The present endeavour explores and describes the development of Deleuze's interpretation of Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*⁴⁸. By making specific references to *Proust and Signs*, the current endeavour seeks to explicate a reasoning which supports Deleuze's claim that "interpretation is the converse of a production of signs themselves" (*Proust* 1)⁴⁹. In brief, this chapter will take three things into consideration: the assumptions that Deleuze makes when reading Proust; how they contribute to the development of his literary trajectory; and, the significance and impact of his theories on meaning-making. Therefore, the intention is to study how "determinable procedures" produce interpretable signs in a work of art, in this case *Remembrance* (Deleuze, *Proust* 1). Although the current chapter wishes to determine the constituents of 'Deleuzian' theory, it is essentially an interpretation (i.e., an interpretation of what 'Deleuzianism' might be). Also, the inspection and conclusion that follow are predisposed towards a limitation that is set forth by the very nature of hermeneutics itself.

There is much to speak about concerning the exchange between an interpretation and a sign/marker. More often than not, the act of recollection is thought to be the key when considering methods involving 'how to interpret'. For instance, the character, Socrates, in Plato's *Meno*, proposes that knowledge is dependent on a memory that has been accumulated through time. Thus, in several dialogues, Socrates suggests that

⁴⁸ Proust, Marcel. *Remembrance of Things Past*. Trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin. 3 Vols. New York: Vintage, 1981. The discussion abbreviates the work as, *Remembrance*.

⁴⁹ The abbreviation of Deleuze's work, *Proust and Signs*, is, *Proust*.

knowledge, such as that concerning virtue, wisdom and justice, is ‘pre-programmed’—the idea of ‘anamnesis’.

An episode involving Socrates, a slave boy and the subject of geometry, demonstrates the correlation between the *a priori* and knowledge. Socrates argues that owing to the boy’s latent potential, the latter is able to provide correct answers to geometry related questions in spite of not having studied the subject. Socrates postulates that because the boy possesses the potential to ‘recollect’ as well as ‘deliver’ knowledge that has been ‘built-in’ into his system, appropriate questioning and prompting naturally lead to the ‘right’ answers. This episode foregrounds a paradox even though it contributes to Plato’s development of the Theory of Forms.

Socrates and the premise that he advocates suggest that all knowledge must be acknowledged as ‘learnt’, regardless of whether there is any actual recollection of having learnt it or not. However, can the presentness of that ‘present’ knowledge be accumulated/preserved when it does not, in the first place, ‘exist’ within the scope of a memory? The paradox of learning suggests that certain things are beyond learning because the premise for learning must be discovered before any learning can take place.

The study of how an interpretation and a sign/marker correlate has resulted in a wide variety of contemporary critical theories. For the purpose of understanding ‘how to interpret’, rigorous interpretative methodologies, involving the subject, object and event have been constructed. Analyses consisting of these three constitutions include assessing the subject in relation to his/her social context, understanding the connections that the object projects and being aware of the possibilities that an event gives rise to. These theories of interpretation, for example, speculate that the attempt to understand how

signs/markers function is likely to end up inconclusive. Due to the interpretative ambiguity that emerges from presuppositions, differing authorial intentions, and/or the evolution of words, the interpretation of any event will irrevocably lead to infinite reinterpretations and reinterpretations. In order to facilitate a discussion on this hermeneutical condition, Deleuze's intellectual trajectory is being used as a case study. The 'multiple-ness' that composes his arguments serves as a promising platform for exploring a pluralistic approach to interpretation.

However, an interpretation of Deleuze's work is a reading carried out from a particular perspective. There are two reasons for this assertion: any interpretation is but an interpretation; and, according to John Rajchman, Deleuze does not map out meanings "in a predetermined plane with fixed coordinates" (4-5). The opacity that Deleuze exhibits in his work has been commented upon by many others, including Paul Patton, John Protevi and Leonard Lawlor. As a matter of fact, the density of Deleuze's writing can be extrapolated from the observation that despite being a slender volume consisting of less than a hundred pages, *Kant's Critical Philosophy* (1963) manages to crystallise all three volumes of Kant's *Critiques*. Of course, just like any other rereading, Deleuze's reinterpretation of the *Critiques* is necessarily selective. That is, Deleuze's reading of the *Critiques* bears arbitrariness in relation to 'what Kant is trying to convey'. As such, the intention, 'to interpret', carries a fundamental dilemma, whereby all variations of interpretations are necessarily incomplete⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ The problem of 'arbitrariness' confronts any approach to interpretation. That is, since not one interpretation can be deemed, 'correct', all interpretations are equally 'correct' then. Although there is much to be said about interpretation and relativism, the focus here is to examine how Deleuze's work succeeds in contributing to an understanding of how the interpretative functions.

The object of analysis in *Proust, Remembrance*, must first be dealt with in some detail prior to delivering an outline of Deleuze reading Proust. Briefly, *Remembrance* relates the story of a narrator who observes ‘nothing’. That is to say, *Remembrance* gives the impression of making a conscientious effort to recount a single story in as many ways as possible. This duplicity, which conveys a sense of repeatedness, culminates in a tapestry embroiled in profound complexities. Further, the repetitive searching after and encapsulating of ‘lostness’, which involve memory, experience and time, invariably suggest an unfolding of differences. Of *Remembrance*’s repeatable differences, Deleuze concludes that Proust must have conceived the work as “an apparatus or a machine capable of functioning effectively, *producing signs of different orders*, which will have an effect on the reader” ultimately (*Proust* 1).

As a point of departure, the following excerpt condenses Deleuze’s concerns with *Remembrance*. He says,

The problem is raised by Proust on several levels: What constitutes the unity of a work? What makes us “communicate” with a work? What constitutes the unity of art, if there is such a thing? We have given up seeking a unity which would unify the parts, a whole which would totalise the fragments. For it is the character and nature of the parts or fragments to exclude the Logos both as logical unity and as organic totality. But there is, there must be a unity which is the unity *of* this very multiplicity, a whole which is the whole *of* just these fragments: a One and a Whole which would not be the principle but, on the contrary, “the effect” of the multiplicity and of its disconnected parts. One and Whole which would

function as effect, effect of machines, instead of as principles. A communication which would not be posited in principle, but which would result from the operation of the machines and their detached parts, their noncommunicating fragments.

(Deleuze, *Proust* 144-145)

The following interpretation is an elementary interpretation of the above citation. A sign that marks the repeatability of difference (i.e., the ‘search’ of *Remembrance*) points to a continuum that is yet to be transformed⁵¹. Therefore, the ongoing discovery of a ‘centre’ that can facilitate the active production of a difference and deference refers to a unity that eludes unification— transverseness. Moreover, this transversality constitutes the singular unity and totality of the sign; the ‘transverse’ places precedence on the emission and multiplication of signs as it encourages differencing and deferencing (Deleuze, *Proust* 149). The effect is: the oneness of a multiplicity and the disconnectness of a whole. That is, the “whole parts” cannot “totalised” and the “unifying” parts does not “unite” (150).

In short, Deleuze is not too concerned with the conceptual themes that make up the implicit and evolving meanings of *Remembrance*. Rather, he seems to be engaged by how these themes collectively lay bare as signs. For instance, Marcel’s madeline is not just a motif to denote the encounters experienced by his senses and memory. The cake acts as a sign pointing to an involuntary emotion that forces thought (i.e., the unconscious) into thinking (i.e., conscious)—suddenly, the essence of Combray/Balbec/Venice infiltrates and overwhelms Marcel’s consciousness. Together with other types of markers, including ‘landscapes’, ‘art’ and ‘love’, “signs form both the

⁵¹ A remark that Deleuze makes on Balzac’s style. He says, “In Balzac there coexist, *not digested, not yet transformed*, all the elements of a style-to-come which does not exist”. (Deleuze, *Proust* 146).

unity and plurality of the Search” in *Remembrance* (Deleuze, *Proust* 5). So, the search for ‘lost’ time is presented as a system of signs that induces meanings, but evades permanent decipherability. Hence, “meaning itself is identified with this development of the sign, as the sign was identified with the involution of meaning . . . [held] *in [a] complication*, it puts the one in the other” (Deleuze, *Proust* 89).

As “one” is “put into the other”, the unity that effects the “multiple” and “disconnected” fragments of *Remembrance* must be a system that resists complete comprehension. Deleuze endorses this ambivalency when upon contemplating the question “What constitutes the unity of *In Search of Lost Time*?” he concludes that “We know, at least, what does not” (Deleuze, *Proust* 3). After all, the possibility of an interpretation is presented only when involuntary signs betray profound meanings which are to envelop and implicate the unity of external signs (16). Subsequently, even the most basic of all signs provoke a sense of uncertainty. For instance, the worldly signs of social decorum, convention and etiquette ask to be interpreted, deciphered and explicated (17). What then, gives rise to an unexpected blush? Why is there a need to glance in secrecy? Is there ‘hidden’ meaning behind a seemingly oblique remark? While the worldly sign is stereotypical as it “stands for action and for thought”, the “vacuity” that confers ritual perfect/formalistic meaning upon a marker is ultimately irreducible (Deleuze, *Proust* 6-7). This is because the worldly sign, like all other signs, is “empty” (7). On the nature of meaning and a sign’s relation to its meaning, Deleuze postulates that “*the work of art [. . .] produces within itself and upon itself its own effects, and is filled with them, and nourished by them*” (*Proust* 84; 136).

Since there is nothing outside of the sign, its signification is the result of an intra-folding. In other words, the constitution of the “whole which would totalise the fragments” (144) is an intra-differentiation that expresses a recurring freedom to create and to become. For instance, Marcel’s madeline contextualises Combray in two different ways: the experience of eating the cake in the past is internalised as present; Combray as experienced in the past is recalled in the present: the past is present. Though it is possible to interpret what ‘Combray’ may come to mean, the signification(s) that accompanies it bears a degree of ‘inadequacy’ (i.e., a ‘lack’) since its presence is perpetually fragmented and fragmenting (Deleuze, *Proust* 149). Being an “effect of machines, instead of principles”, the reading of any sign does not communicate a single interpretation. Deleuze explains that signs “do not have the same way of appearing, do not allow themselves to be deciphered in the same manner, do not have identical relation with their meaning” (*Proust* 5). That is, while signs are assigned to designate specific objects, they signify something different each and every time (26).

Hence, Deleuze posits that the essence of interpreting signs is “a difference, the absolute and ultimate Difference” (*Proust* 41) that conveys “non-communicating fragments”. For instance, every subject observes the world from a different perspective and a “point of view is difference itself, internal absolute difference” (42). However, this does not amount to ‘subjectivism’ because “it is not the subject which explains essence [i.e., internal absolute difference], rather it is essence which implicates, envelops, wraps itself up in the subject” (43). Thus, “essence” and “subject” merge and emerge through an unfolding of differentiation. Similarly, Marcel remarks that style is a question not of technique but of vision: it is a “revelation” that cannot be understood via direct and

conscious methods (Proust III 931). That is, difference-in-itself highlights the qualitative difference between differences.

As a consequence, interpreting the sign (or, interpretation itself) “has become crumbs and chaos” because “order has collapsed, as much in the states of the [interpretative] which were supposed to reproduce it as in the essences or Ideas which were supposed to inspire it” (Deleuze, *Proust* 98). Accordingly, a reading of *Remembrance* is independent of pre-determined essence. In place of an essence, an ‘individualised’ being, Deleuze puts forward a principle of individuation. He says, “This is precisely the originality of Proustian reminiscence: it proceeds from a mood, from a state of soul, and from its associative chains, to a creative or transcendent viewpoint—and no longer, in Plato’s fashion, from a state of the world to seen objectivities” (Deleuze, *Proust* 98). This proposition implies that the act of reading engages the “disparity”, “incommensurability” and “disintegration of the parts”, which, in turn, render an investigation of tale-telling “breaks”, “lacunae” and “intermittences” (103).

For the purpose of studying how signs produce “the effect of [a] multiplicity” (144) that is symptomatic of a reading of *Remembrance*, Deleuze studies the relationship between ‘containers’ and ‘contents’. The chain of ‘containers’ that he chooses to ‘unpack’ includes an ‘object’, a ‘character’ and a ‘name’. They represent ‘madeline’, ‘Albertine’ and ‘Balbec’, respectively. A brief survey of these markers yields the following interpretation. ‘Container madeline’ holds the memory of a Combray that is reconstructed based on imagination: it represents a life-at-Combray that Marcel never had. ‘Container Albertine’ holds the impersonal perspective that arises from “a force” that “breaks” a chain of associations, which links Albertine, Balbec and Marcel (Deleuze,

Proust 107). ‘Container Balbec’ holds the association between the landscape and its impregnable meanings: the meaning waits—and remains waiting—for Marcel’s comprehension.

In the abovementioned examples, making meaning out of the relationship between ‘container’ and ‘content’ lies beyond the empirical container/content. An ‘outsideness’, which points to the presence of an ‘absent’, and a ‘silence’, which speaks, demonstrate that interpretation is made possible because some ‘thing’ is ‘not there’. Deleuze says, “In all the aspects of [a gap between content and container], then, the inadequation, the incommensurability of the content is manifested: *either it is a lost content*, which brings the self to its death, *or a separated content*, which casts [. . .] inevitable disappointment” (*Proust* 108). As a result, meaning-making “can never be organised hierarchically and objectively” (108).

Because the unity of a work is constituted by a ‘gap’, outsideness articulates the essence of an effective “whole”. In order to emphasise that “whole” is not “absolute” (i.e., ‘being’), Deleuze asserts that ‘essence’ is “a kind of superior *viewpoint*, an irreducible viewpoint which signifies at once the birth [. . . that] always constitutes [. . .]” (*Proust* 98). He lists the five viewpoints that contribute to the interpretation of signs:

[1.] The configuration of the parts as they are outlined in the world; [2.] the nature of the law they reveal; [3] the use of the faculties they solicit; [4.] the type of unity they create; and [5.] the structure of the language which translates and interprets them. It is from all these viewpoints—parts, law, use, unity, style—that the sign [makes meaning].

(Deleuze, *Proust* 96)

Thus, it is ‘plurality’, and not ‘*logos*’ that holds together the chain of dynamic attributions which makes up a sign. The signification that binds the contents of *Remembrance* is a repeating difference, where an individuating viewpoint refracts multiple viewpoints. Specifically, concerning the status of an ‘essence’/unity, Deleuze says that it is “an individuating viewpoint superior to the individuals themselves, breaking with their chains of associations; essence appears *alongside* these chains, incarnated in a closed fragment, *adjacent* to what it overwhelms, *contiguous* to what it reveals” (*Proust* 143). In sum, “*without anything lacking*” (143), the ‘associative’ and ‘creative’ maintain the ‘essence’ of a single plurality. So, what ensures the continuity and connectivity of a One and a Whole that function as an effect?

Deleuze advances “a radical, absolute beginning” (*Proust* 44) in an attempt to delineate how a “One and a Whole” is “effect[ed]”. He suggests that the “productiv[ity] of certain truths” (129) depends on the efficacy of an “antilogos”. He elaborates how this ‘mechanism’ functions:

To the *logos*, organ and organon whose meaning must be discovered in the whole to which it belongs, is opposed the antilogos, machine and machinery whose meaning (anything you like) depends solely on its functioning, which, in turn, depends on its separate parts [. . . the interpretative] has no problem of meaning, it has only a problem of use”

(Deleuze, *Proust* 29)

In sum, the “antilogos” effects a “functioning” because it is an “involuntary machine of interpretation” (131).

Hence, the Search in *Remembrance* is a machine producing orders of truths; the production of truths occurs as signs open themselves up for interpreting, deciphering and translating (Deleuze, *Proust* 130-131). For instance, a sign, like ‘time’ (or, ‘truth’), conveys the effect of an “explicative style” (148). Deleuze identifies three orders of time, which correlate with three orders of truths. The first order, ‘lost time’, is defined by “reminiscences and essences” that equate to ‘worldly signs’. The second order, ‘time regained’, is concerned with “unfulfilled” and “unperceived” pleasures and pains that correspond to involuntary memory and emotion. And, the third order, ‘eternal time’, is about the ceaselessness of an “alteration” that will see to an eternally repeating repetition and difference (Deleuze, *Proust* 131-132).

Each of these three orders of time acts as a ‘machine’ that produces a degree of truth. The first machine produces truths that are related to the ‘lost-ness’ of time. These, include material signs (i.e., ‘objects’), such as containers, girls, and Venice. No more than crude resemblances, signs produced by the first machine are “*partial objects* [. . .] fragments without totality, vessels without communication, partitioned scenes” (Deleuze, *Proust* 133). The second machine produces truths that are related to ‘regaining’ time. For instance, involuntary memory “affects” two moments of experience: the present and a prior one (133). Therefore, the violin and the piano resonate with one another within the ‘rendition’ of the Vinteuil sonata. The third machine produces truths that are related to the ‘eternity’ of time. This ‘eternal-ness’ points to an ‘immutable’ force, which exerts ‘eventualities’, including death, degeneration and transversality. For instance, towards the end of *Remembrance* Marcel realises the signification of experiencing time and death. That is, regardless of the uncertainty of those who still live, or the surety of those who

have already passed on (e.g., Marcel's past love interests), nothing escapes the perennial progress of dying and the eventuality of death. As a result, the third machine does not simply produce an interpretation of 'what the Search is'⁵²; it effects a unity that makes the plurality (i.e., multiplicity) of multiplicities "One" and "Whole".

Subsequently, "a very special mode of unity irreducible to any 'unification'" (Deleuze, *Proust* 149) underscores the interconnection between a 'one' and the 'whole'. In other words, the interpretation of what a sign can come to mean is aligned with an 'unlacking' lack: an uncomplete that completes, an unspoken that speaks and an absent that presents. Deleuze clarifies how the 'unintended' functions when he comments that "this text certainly invokes a continuity and a totality; but the essential point is to know where these are elaborated—neither in the viewpoint nor in the thing seen, but in the transversal [. . .]" (Deleuze, *Proust* 153). He cites the incident of Marcel catching sight of the pink sky whilst on a train ride as an example. The connection between "continuity", "totality" and "transversality" is depicted as Marcel makes a mental edit of the sequence as well as significance of the images that pass by the window at his seat. Essentially, Marcel's train ride and the scenery that passes him by evoke an interpretation that seeks "not to unify the viewpoints of a landscape, but to bring them into communication according to their own dimension. It is transversality which constitutes the singular unity and totality of [possible meaning]" (Deleuze, *Proust* 149).

Hence, according to Deleuze, "transversality" facilitates the "communication" that makes sense of "detached" and "noncommunicating fragments". He considers transverse-ness to be "the new linguistic convention" that establishes, unites and totalises

⁵² Deleuze interprets this as "the search for causes" (*Proust* 136).

“without unifying or totalising objects and subjects” (Deleuze, *Proust* 150). While a sign accords its peculiar discourse, this unfolding is, nonetheless, dependent on an external medium: the subject. Thus, signs, including objects, places and people, function within a system that is effect-producing; stimulated by the possibilities that signs possess, a subject constructs ‘meanings/significations’ which otherwise will not enter into presence⁵³. As such, the nature of meaning and a sign’s correlation to its meanings is represented by “*an associative, incongruous chain [that] is unified only by a creative viewpoint which itself takes the role of an incongruous part within a whole*” (102). The unfolding pluralism within a system of refolding signs is perpetuated by the antilogos (i.e., transversality), which works towards endorsing an organic unity a radical “complication” that envelops the many in the One and affirms the unity of the multiple (44).

For instance, the creative⁵⁴ complication that affords the emission of interpretable signs is reflected in the encounter between Marcel and ‘time’. The passages of ‘lost’, ‘regained’ and ‘eternal’ time exemplify the passing of significations that are passive, active and empty, respectively. And, because their relations are inseparable from one another, this internalisation, or virtuality, becomes immanent (Deleuze, *Proust* 59-60).

‘Lost time’ represents ‘time past’. And the ‘pastness’ and ‘decayedness’ of time are exhibited in a chain of ‘cause and effect’. Marcel being reminded of his grandmother’s death when removing his boots is an example that attests to the stimulus-

⁵³ The affinity between subject, object and interpretation is studied in the field of reception theory.

⁵⁴ Deleuze asserts that “[. . .] to remember is to create, is to reach that point where the associative chain breaks, leaps over the constituted individual, is transferred to the birth of an individuating world” (*Proust* 99).

response type of association. 'Time regained' represents 'present time'. And, this 'presentness' of time helps to reveal a mature Marcel. He realises that, in the past, too much time has been wasted on seeking superficial pleasures. 'Eternal time' represents 'universal time'. A "perpetual recreation of the primordial elements of nature" (Deleuze, *Proust* 44), 'eternal time' transgresses the very 'structure' that yields it. The multiplicity of a singularity, the universality of eternal time is all at once 'inside' and 'outside' of an 'itself' that escapes itself.

So, the passiveness accrued by lost time, the activeness mobilised by time regained and the emptiness affirmed by eternal time culminate in a pure state. That is, the very be-coming of the past, present and future within itself (Deleuze, *Proust* 59). For instance, *Remembrance* concludes with Marcel being enlightened to the condition that experiences are meaningful only when they are 'meaningless', or 'void of meaning' to begin with—the hypothesis of the floating signifier. As he becomes one who affirms life by evolving in tandem with an unrepresentable time, Marcel 'becomes' in his own 'be-coming'. Deleuze encapsulates the incorporeality of Marcel's 'becoming' as follows:

It is obvious that something essential escapes voluntary memory: the past's being *as past*. Voluntary memory proceeds as if the past were constituted as such after it has been present. It would therefore have to wait for a new present so that the preceding one could pass by, or become past. But in this way the essence of time escapes us. For if the present was not past at the same time as present, if the same moment did not coexist with itself as present *and* past, it would never pass, a new present would never come to replace this one. The past as it is in itself coexists with, and

does not succeed, the present it has been. It is true that we do not apprehend something as past at the very moment when we experience it as present [. . .] But this is because joint memory establish a real succession where, more profoundly, there is a virtual coexistence.

(*Proust* 56-57)

Before turning to examine how Deleuze's assertions correlate with the problematics of interpretation, a summary of this chapter thus far. Deleuze's *Proust* is about the differencing and deferring of both the production and interpretation of signs. The work elaborates how a sign, owing to an ongoing repetition of its differentiability in relation to other signs, is in itself a difference that refolds and unfolds. This re/unfolding of differencing and repeatability points to two crucial aspects of the sign: the purity of a sign (e.g., 'truth') is based on difference and deference (i.e., "transversality", "antilogos" and "a principle of individuation") and some 'thing' automates the production of repeatable differences. As such,

"There is no Logos, there are only hieroglyphs. To think is therefore to interpret, is therefore to translate. The essences are at once the thing to be translated and the translation itself, the sign and the meaning [. . .] Everywhere is the hieroglyph, whose double symbol is the accident of the encounter and the necessity of thought: "fortuitous and inevitable".

(Deleuze, *Proust* 167)

Clearly, the focus of Deleuze's critical examination of signification and interpretation is 'deference and difference' (i.e., \uparrow deference) and not essence (i.e., *logos*).
difference

Since a ‘lacking’ predisposes the mechanics of repeatable difference, its functioning departs from hierarchal demarcations, such as ‘essence’ versus ‘Essence’, ‘truths’ versus ‘Truth’ and ‘thoughts’ versus ‘Thought’. Thus, ‘representation’ is marked by the re-presentation of the non-presentable. For instance, Claude Lévi-Strauss proposes that the ‘floating signifier’—the re-presentable—embodies a default lacking as well as signifies excess signification. The co-presence of the non/sense suggest an immediacy that brings differentiation, re-presentation and interpretation together. Furthermore, a reconstitution of ‘time’ and ‘space’ is construed within an infinite production of producing possibilities.

Hence, Deleuze’s concept of time presents a series of fractured perspectives. This in turn foregrounds the making of an unrepresentable space. That is to say, the time-space a-chronology destabilises a *logos*-centric congruity which presumes a successive transition of past to present to future. Deleuze’s argument highlights that neither the past, present nor future is captured within isolated points on the time-space continuum. The presentness within the passing of a present moment and the moments immediate to it must be simultaneous and ongoing. As every moment of the present co-exists with the past, all ‘pasts’ are part of a single continuous to-be-presented present. While the past-present-future is featured as a collective passing, the actualisations of the ‘past’, ‘present’ and ‘future’ archives “individuation”. For instance, the past possesses a ‘virtual’ presence whilst the present possesses an ‘actual’ presence. Though both past and present are just as ‘real’, the ‘virtual’ can never be defined as ‘actual’⁵⁵.

⁵⁵ C.f., “But let a noise or a scent, once heard or once smelt, be heard or smelt again in the present and at the same time in the past, *real without being actual, ideal without being abstract* [my italics] and immediately the permanent and habitually concealed essence of things is liberated” (Proust III 905-06).

As Deleuze considers the experience and interpretation of signs (*Proust* 1), concepts including ‘difference’, ‘repetition’ and ‘transversality’ are set forth. The manifestation of these ideas acts as alternatives to conventional understanding (e.g., *logos*-centric theories) of ‘how to see’. For instance, the multiplicity of a singular effects the refolding of an unfolding becoming (i.e., *logos* versus plurality). Concisely, Deleuze’s authorship interrogates the issue ‘how **might** one interpret’, thereby forging a response that orientates towards an absent—the ‘to come’. For instance, throughout *Proust*, he speaks about how signs are reproducible because they do not represent any signification—as ‘functions’, signs operate solely to proliferate effects.

Deleuze’s trajectory unfolds a methodology for thinking about ‘how to think’. In short, his work constitutes an “unattributable” assemblage that “exists only through the outside and on the outside” (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 4). That is to say, the (in)conspicuousness of the Deleuzian principle aims at uncovering and developing fresh ways of making meaning and signification. This openness, which advocates ‘interpretation in itself, for itself’, connotes a perpetual alteration that constructs by unconstructing⁵⁶. By embracing the pluralness of a singularity, which “*produces effects of resonance and forced movements*” (*Proust* 148), Deleuze purports that the unity of “One and Whole” is a continuous passing of “difference, the absolute and ultimate Difference” (41).

⁵⁶ C.f., the idea of remembering by forgetting in Alain Resnais’ *Hiroshima Mon Amour*.

Chapter Five: An Interpretation of Interpretations of Time

This chapter will offer a perspective on the correlation between two concepts: time and multiplicity. Although the intention here is to deliver an understanding of ‘what time might be’, the discussion will neither be a chronology documenting the development of time nor a concise summary of the traditions that seek to describe what time is. Instead of trying to determine the problems and solutions which are associated to the concept of time, this discussion will be about how time orientates a ‘temporal unity’ that directs itself towards itself. That is, how time exists as an unfolding of itself from its own possibilities and be-come-ing.

J.M.E. McTaggart’s claim that “time is unreal” (23) is one of the responses to St. Augustine’s question “What, then, is time?”⁵⁷. The former defends his proposition in an essay entitled “The Unreality of Time” (1908). He explains that

Positions in time, as time appears to us *prima facie*, are distinguished in two ways. Each position is Earlier than some and Later than some of the other positions. To constitute such a series there is required a transitive asymmetrical relation, and a collection of terms such that, of any two of them, either the first is in this relation to the second, or the second is in this relation to the first [. . .]

In the second place, each position is either Past, Present, or Future. The distinctions of the former class are permanent, while those of the latter are

⁵⁷ In Book 11 of *Confessions*, Augustine asks, “What, then, is time?” (263). After deliberating over the question, he concludes that “I know well enough what it is, provided that nobody asks me; but if I am asked what it is and try to explain, I am baffled” (264). The dilemma that has Augustine “baffled” exemplifies a fundamental issue: What does it mean to experience and/or perceive time?

not. If *M* is ever earlier than *N*, it is always earlier. But an event, which is now present, was future, and will be past.

Since distinctions of the first class are permanent, it might be thought that they were more objective, and more essential to the nature of time, than those of the second class. I believe, however, that this would be a mistake, and that the distinction of past, present, and future is as *essential* to time as the distinction of earlier and later, while in a certain sense it may . . . be regarded as more *fundamental* than the distinction of earlier and later. And it is because the distinctions of past, present, and future seem to me to be essential for time that I regard time as unreal.

(McTaggart 24)

In short, the appearance of a temporal order is illusionary. McTaggart maintains that while it “seems highly paradoxical to assert that Time is unreal, and that all statements which involve its reality are erroneous [. . .] the belief in the unreality of time has shown itself to be singularly persistent” (23). He elaborates on how time is indeed unreal by studying the ways in which it can be ordered.

Though McTaggart thinks that there are three ways to distinguish the passing of time (i.e., Series A, B and C), the present discussion will only examine two⁵⁸. According to him, the position of a point in time can refer to something specific, like ‘yesterday’

⁵⁸ McTaggart’s article does not make an explicit reference to the C-series of time. However, the C-series can be inferred from the fact that he says, “Whether we place the object of our belief or of our contemplation in the present, the past, or the future will depend upon the characteristics of that object. *But somewhere in the A series it will be place* (my italics)” (29). Thus, a time-within-time exists in the A-series. As such, the first and third series of time appear to be repetitions. Basically, “just as far as a thing is in time, it is in the A series” (29). That is, the conditions that make up the A- and C-series are “essential to time” (30). In other words, “Time only belongs to the existent. [. . .] It may be questioned whether all of what exists is in time, or even whether anything really existent is in time, but it would not be denied that, if anything is in time, it must exist” (29).

(i.e., 'one day has past'), 'today' (i.e., 'the present') and 'tomorrow' (i.e., 'one day into the future'). He names this category of time the 'A-series'. Since the A-series involves constant change, it is considered to be 'essential time'. Further, between various points of time, relationships are formed. For instance, time x is related to time y even though they occur at a different point. So, Saturday comes before Sunday and Tuesday comes after Monday. McTaggart calls this category of time the 'B-series'. Because the B-series relates one position of time to another (i.e., the distinction of an 'earlier' and 'later'), it points to a variety of fixed time. So both A- and B-series will have to complement each other if time is indeed real. Essentially,

[. . .] if there is any change, it must be looked for in the *A* series, and in the *A* series alone. If there is no real *A* series, there is no real change. The *B* series, therefore, is not by itself sufficient to constitute time, since time involves change.

The *B* series, however, cannot exist except as temporal, since earlier and later, which are the relations which connect its terms are clearly time-relations. So it follows that there can be *B* series when there is no *A* series, since without an *A* series there is no time.

(McTaggart 26-27)

Herein lies the paradox that McTaggart attempts to present in his theory concerning the unreality of time. Can a point in time, say, x , be both past and future? After all, x must be the future at some point of past time and will be the past at some point of future time. But, can a point in time be, for example, both past and future? He explains that every event must be one or the other and no event can be more than one

event in itself. Therefore, 'past', 'present' and 'future' are incompatible determinations. This is to say, time involves a 'transition'; a change that occurs between future and present, present and past (and past and future). And so, "this exclusiveness is essential to change, and therefore to time" (McTaggart 32). Consequently, within the A-series, no point of time is compatible with another. In this case, can A-series still complement B-series when these two positions of time do not correlate? This is especially when B-series constitutes the relationships between different times. Since a contradiction leads from the premise which A-series is being built upon, and A-series is as essential as B-series in the composition of time, McTaggart concludes that the distinctions of past, present and future are never true of reality. He attempts to validate this assertion by pointing out that

The attribution of the characteristics past, present, and future to the terms of any series leads to a contradiction, unless it is specified that they have them successively. This means [. . .] that they have them in relation to terms specified as past, present, and future. These again, to avoid a like contradiction, must in turn be specified as past, present, and future. And, since this continues infinitely, the first set of terms never escapes from contradiction at all.

(McTaggart 33)

But, the ability to perceive x as 'x' and not 'y' means that there is something within a series of somethings—the changes which take place within a changing. Hence, something is really 'present', 'past', or 'future' and something is really earlier or later than anything else or temporally simultaneous with it. As such, some thing really changes and something really exists in 'time'. While the unreality of time remains debatable,

McTaggart's argument highlights one salient point: different points of time are 'related' to one another. In order to examine how frames of time related to one another, a case study on television commercials follows.

Many television commercials promote fantastic laundry attributes, which are delivered by this or that brand of detergent. Typically, the viewer is shown a 'before' image of soiled clothes, followed by an 'after' image of clean looking ones. The purpose for showing the two successive images is to put across the message, 'product 'x' is an excellent laundry product'. Duplication in format and structure of these detergent commercials possess a consistent formula: a 'before' that turns into an 'after' with some other things happening in between. Frame one: soiled clothes. Frame two: application of product 'x' onto soiled clothes. Frame three: wait for 'y' minutes. Frame four: soiled clothes and more of product 'x' are placed into a washing machine. Frame five: clothes appear immaculately clean. In the case of the detergent television commercial, 'time' is encapsulated in an apparent transition between different states. That is, the alterations embodied in the respective frame one, two, three, and so forth demonstrate the passing of time. And so, the commercial shows that a qualitative change has occurred between time 'before' and 'after': soiled clothes have become clean within a 'y' period of time.

The abovementioned television commercial demonstrates the 'effect' of time. As Aristotle claims, time is equivalent to the motions taken to connect a 'before' with an 'after'. Although several ancient Greek philosophers, including Heraclitus, Parmenides and Plato have written on the subject of time, its analysis is refined by Aristotle. For instance, the latter applies formal logical techniques (i.e., modal logic) to probe the nature of time. Aristotle observes that change(s) that take place during a moment, and another

moment, and another moment . . . ∞ add up to compose some ‘thing’ called ‘time’. As he takes into consideration Heraclitus’ theory concerning ‘flux’ and ‘rationality’, as well as Plato’s theory on ‘the natural world of changing things’, Aristotle posits a theory that relates a correlation between time, change and motion.

Aristotle advocates that the transition of time does not progress in tandem with motion. This is because motion is related to the movement of objects, whereas, time, being pervasive, is ‘everywhere’. Moreover, if time is the measure of motion, for example object ‘x’ is moving faster than object ‘y’, can it be identified with the very thing it measures? Technically speaking, ‘motion’ is the process of moving, or ‘changing position’, through space: motion is equated to change. So, due to a change which involves motion, it becomes possible to tell that ‘time has passed’. As such, time is not the yardstick for measuring change/motion; rather, being oblivious to change/motion results in the inability to ‘tell time’.

Though Aristotle’s theory of time is an attempt at clarifying the question, ‘What is time?’ the focus of his argument appears to explicate duration instead. In Chapter 11 of *Physics*, he asserts that time is the “number of movements in respect of the before and after, and is continuous [. . .]”. In this way, time is defined as a successions of ‘nows’ counted on the basis of a ‘before’ and an ‘after’ motion. Further, since there is always a ‘now’ after any given ‘now’ time is always beginning and continuing.

At this point, it is necessary to return to the example of the television commercial once again. The commercial shows that it takes five ‘frames’ (i.e., a period of time constituting five frames) to clean a load of clothes. Since change is deduced by counting frames of time, their succession is equated to ‘before’ and ‘after’. However, Aristotle

contends that a 'frame of time' (i.e., 'now') neither makes up nor is part of time⁵⁹. This is because the succession of a 'before' and an 'after' indicate a single transition: the present. For instance, a 'presence' is 'present' throughout the duration of the laundry commercial. And, the various frames/stages that constitute time are instants of presents that make up the presentness of the commercial. This assertion highlights that there are two folds to a 'now'. On the one hand, 'now' promotes the continuum of time by connecting the past with the future and on the other, it divides time because it has the potential to interrupt the interval of time.

Aristotle concludes that every change is a result of time passed because the potentiality of each now is realised within the presentness of a present. A single now that 'starts' and 'ends' must be conceived of as an abstraction within the structure of a 'time'. Whilst 'now' and 'time' are co-dependent in terms of their existence, unlike 'time', 'now' is not in transition. That is, a 'now' marks a point within a transition which is made up of many 'nows'. For instance, in frame three of the television commercial, the transformation from 'soiled' to 'clean' within 'y' minutes denotes a change that has taken place within a single continuance. This continuance, or 'duration', demonstrates the elapses between frames one, two, three, four and five. The consequence of the 'event' that has occurred in between any two of these elapses is the qualitative changes which the clothing appears to have undergone (of course, a 30-second block of air time has also

⁵⁹ Aristotle speaks about the paradox of the dot, which compares 'nows' and 'dots'. Owing to the theory of infinite divisibility, he reasons that putting nows in a succession do not add up to a 'line' of time because putting dots in succession cannot form a line. The theory claims that for every dot that is considered, there is always a smaller one halving its diameter. Therefore, it is impossible for two dots to follow one another as an infinite number of dots exist in between them. This argument is problematic because it does not take into account the infinite indivisibility of 'now'.

passed). While the transitional nature of time is recognised, the question, ‘what time is’, still warrants some study.

Augustine suggests that time is ‘real’ because it is created by God. He says,

You are the Maker of all time [. . .] although you are before time, it is not in time that you precede it. If this were so, you would not be before all time. It is in eternity, which is supreme over time because it is a never-ending present, that you are at once before all time and after all future time. For what is now the future, once it comes, will become the past, whereas *you are unchanging, your years can never fail*. Your years neither go nor come, but our years pass and others come after them, so that they all may come in their turn. [. . .] You made all time; you are before all time; and the ‘time’, if we may call it, when there was no time was not time at all.

(Augustine 263)

Augustine thinks that when God was creating the world, time emerged as a by-product. Because the occurrences that take place in the world are ‘transient’ and its inhabitants are affected by ‘change’, the phenomenon of this ‘finitude’ can only be understood via a sense of temporality (e.g., memory and interpretation). Consequently, time is a condition of knowledge. He claims that “if nothing passed, there would be no past time; if nothing were going to happen, there would be no future time; and if nothing *were*, there would be no present time” (Augustine 264).

In other words, time is comparable to a ‘passing’. Also, past and future must exist in a present because the transitoriness of time is an extension of a singular past-present-

future. Augustine posits the oneness of this singularity as an “instant” (266). That is to say, though past and future do not exist, the pastness and futureness present in the presentness of an “instant” endorse a presence. For instance, the past is present in memory, the present is present in interpretation and the future is present in the perception of the to-come. Moreover, because ‘memory’, ‘interpretation’ and ‘perception’ are intermittent reflections of the mind, Augustine maintains that “time emerges from some secret refuge when it passes from the future to the present, and goes back into hiding when it moves from the present to the past” (267). While both past and future are inflected within a present, the instantaneity of this presence can only be described as a state of “*not being*” (264).

One of the responses to Augustine’s ‘lack of being’ is Nietzsche’s notion of ‘rhythmic tension’, which synthesises with momentary becoming. In the case of ‘time’, it is bound together by a force that generates a congruent moment, which consists of many moments of instants. Being both active and reactive at the same time, Nietzsche expounds a theory that sees to the perpetual repetition of a differentiation. On the one hand, the circularity of possibilities maintains a reaffirmation of repeated possibilities. This culminates as an active repetition of difference. On the other hand, the negation within this very circularity of possibilities acts upon itself and so possibilities are reassigned repeatedly: the reactive difference of repetition. Of this steadfast differencing and deferring, Nietzsche calls it “a monster of force, without beginning, without end, a fixed, iron quantity of force which grows neither larger nor smaller, which doesn’t

exhaust but only transforms itself, as a whole unchanging [. . .] enclosed by ‘nothingness’ [. . .]”⁶⁰ (*Writings* 38).

A same that radically departs from sameness, Nietzsche formulates a “*quantum of power, a becoming*” (*Writings* 212) that is to unfold through the differentiation of the force. This implies that the return of returning time is neither a series of recurring events, nor a state of straightforward repetition. The “*Dionysian* world of eternal self-creating, of eternal self-destroying” (*Writings* 38) is an affirmation of a returning recurrence that approximates the rhythm of a pure progression. Thus,

If the world had a goal, it could not fail to have been reached by now. If it had an unintended final state, this too could not fail to have been reached. If it were capable at all of standing still and remaining frozen, of ‘being’, then in turn all becoming would long since be over and done with, and so would all thinking, all ‘mind’. The fact of ‘mind’ *as a becoming* proves that the world has no goal and no final state and is incapable of being.

(Nietzsche, *Writings* 23)

Therefore, the return of time is a renewing of ‘time’ within each moment and instant: it is an occurrence of time-in-itself: the be-ing of time. Therefore, the presence of time is not presented ‘outside’ of its existence. As such, the becoming of time is a

⁶⁰ The discussion does not refer to the correlation between “eternal return” and “will to power” directly. The attempt to explain how these two concepts function will require a separate paper. Issues that need addressing include their conception, meaning and apparent incompatibility. For instance, the apparent incompatibility between ‘eternal return’ and ‘will of power’ is summarised by Karl Löwith’s “two modes of representation”. He sets the objective-oriented ‘will to power’ as an antithesis of the self-contained ‘eternal recurrence’ (ref. *Nietzsche’s Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same*). In order to explicate the seeming incompatibility, it will be necessary to reinterpret the concept of ‘will to power’. Nietzsche explains the ‘one source’ which all drives can be traced back to: “The triumphant concept of ‘force’, with which our physicists have created God and the world, needs supplementing: it must be ascribed an inner world which I call ‘will to power’, i.e., an insatiable craving to manifest power; or to employ, exercise power, as a creative drive etc.” and so “the will to power can only express itself against *resistances*; it seeks what will resist it” (*Writings* 26; 165)

difference that repeatedly actualises itself in a constant becoming of itself. If there is only the eternal becoming of time to speak of, what is it about time that ‘returns’? What is it that always ‘comes back’? Consider this proposition: The present will not be if the past does not exist. As such, a present moment can never pass if it is not already a past and a future. Hence, the past actualises itself within a present that is to come. That is, the actualising of unactualisable difference(s). Subsequently, the instantaneity of the past-present-future “does not have to preserve in itself anything but itself [. . .] The being of the past in itself is what Bergson called the virtual” (Deleuze, *Proust* 57).

According to Bergson, the becoming of a time that is ‘to come’ is the connection between the past and present. He puts forward a philosophy of time, or *durée*, which reengineers Aristotle’s concept of duration. Bergson purports that it is a mistake to perceive duration as ‘homogeneous’ because it leads to the metaphysical dogmatism (*Matter* 211). That is to say, the elements that make up duration are “dissociated and juxtaposed” (186). Bergson explains his case by deploying the image of an inverted cone as an example. He illustrates:

If I represent by a cone SAB, the totality of the recollections accumulated in my memory, the base AB, situated in the past, remains motionless, while the summit S, which indicates at all times my present, moves forward unceasingly, and unceasingly also touches the moving plane P of my actual representation of the universe.

(Bergson, *Matter* 152)

The imagery of the cone expresses the entirety (i.e., the actual and the virtual) of the past-present-future itself. In this case, no present exists if it has not been already actualised in

the past—the past has become at every present moment. Furthermore, no future exists if it has not been already actualised in a present past—the future past exists in an actualising. Hence, Bergson's *durée* (and, imagery of the cone) represents the realisation of instants, where the becoming of actuals emerges from a field of moments that are already present either as 'have past', or 'are to come': the virtual.

The result of *durée* and its heterogeneity is "enormous multiplicity" (Bergson, *Matter* 70). Bergson elaborates that pure duration is a plurality that pluralises the same within the singularity of difference: qualitative multiplicity is a continuous difference contained within the *durée* of an indivisible whole. He argues for the heterogeneous/singularised, continuous/interpenetrating and progressive/temporal in *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1955). The 'continuity' that composes *durée* is comparable to two spools of thread, where one is on the unwinding end, whilst the other is on the receiving end. The future is likened to the spool of thread that gets smaller and the past is likened to the spool of thread that gets bigger. This analogy foregrounds a self-perpetuating continuity of repeatable heterogeneity and differential folding (i.e., the uncomplete). Bergson sums up this 'uncompletion' by pointing out that "every comparison will be insufficient, because the unrolling of [. . .] duration resembles in some of its aspects the unity of an advancing movement and in others the multiplicity of expanding states [. . .] no metaphor can express one of these two aspects without sacrificing the other" (*Introduction* 27).

Subsequently, two elements compose *durée*: unity (i.e., the actual) and multiplicity (i.e., the virtual). Deleuze comments on this "pure condition" when he says,

The past and the present do not denote two successive moments, but two elements which coexist: One is the present, which does not cease to pass, and the other is the past, which does not cease to be but through which all presents pass. It is in this sense that there is a pure past, a kind of ‘past in general’: The past does not follow the present, but on the contrary, is presupposed by it as the pure condition without which it would not pass.

(*Bergsonism* 59)

The absence of a permanent present is interpretable as an affirmation of all possible possibilities. Under this context, the possible is actually ‘real’, though it lacks existence in the ‘actual’ sense. For instance, the past is present except that it is not being presented in presence. Similarly, the possibility of the virtually possible helps to realise an unfolding folding which constitutes the actualisation of multiplicity⁶¹. Thus, the presentness of past-present-future time is not a unified actualisation that is limited to the actual; it is not a ‘present’ per se. The virtuality that exists in an unfolding presentness is the return of a multiplicity of instantaneous positions, which ensure the coherence of the past with the present (Bergson, *Matter* 187). In this case as Deleuze again says, time is “the ultimate existence of parts, of different sizes and shapes, which cannot be adapted, which do not develop at the same rhythm, and which the stream of style does not sweep along at the same speed. The order of [past-present-future] has collapsed, crumbled into [. . .] non[/]communicative viewpoints” (*Proust* 101).

The Bergsonian concept of actualising the virtual transpires the presentness of an ‘event’. That is, the event of a perpetual production. Deleuze introduces the notion,

⁶¹ C.f., Bergson’s chapter, “The Possible and the Real”, in *The Creative Mind*.

‘event’, in *The Logic of Sense* (1990)⁶². According to Deleuze, ‘event’ describes the state-to-state transformation of some ‘happening’. He says, “The event is not what occurs (an accident), it is rather inside what occurs, the purely expressed” (Deleuze, *Logic* 149). And, the “expressed” is a pure becoming that “divides itself infinitely in past and future and always eludes the present” (*Logic* 5). Deleuze elaborates on the singularising of becoming’s pluralness by describing three syntheses of time in *Difference and Repetition*.

Deleuze’s first synthesis of time is associated with the notion of ‘habit’. Because the first synthesis follows the stimulus-response model, the notion of time is based upon a ‘before’ and an ‘after’. Thus, time is produced as a present in present. By connecting the past and future within an instant, independent occurrences are braided into a singular timeline. Therefore, within this constitution, instances of actual pasts are retained while possible futures are being opened up. This amalgamation produces an immediate present. That is, the synthesis of past-present-future through the repeatability of differencing. Deleuze calls this ‘variation’ a ‘disguise’ that expresses the “differential mechanism which belong to the essence and origin of that which is repeated” (*Difference* 19-20). Though the past is independent of the present and future, these three variations are singularised within an ever presenting. Nevertheless, if past-present-future exists within the present, how does the past pass?

In the passing of a past, its presentness re-produces and re-represents all other presents, thereby channelling all possibilities into a unity: the past. Thus, the first synthesis of time occurs in time. That is to say, there are two aspects to the activeness of

⁶² In the chapter, “Twenty-First Series of the Event”, Deleuze asks, “What does it mean then to will the event?”. He puts forward that “It will now not exactly what occurs, but something *in* that which occurs, something yet to come which would be consistent with what occurs, something yet to come which would be consistent with what occurs, in accordance with the laws of an obscure, humorous conformity: the Event’ (Deleuze, *Logic* 149).

this 'present' synthesis: the present of the present and a prior past. While the first aspect, the present of the present, is a straightforward presentation of presentness, the second aspect, prior past, requires clarification. The prior past is not an accumulation of presents that have passed. Instead, it is a present-past that constitutes the present and prior presents (i.e., the prior past archives the 'presenting presents').

Consequently, Deleuze's second synthesis of time suggests a presence that is a pure past. Because it is based upon a past that is not actualised, the second synthesis is related to 'remembering'. So in order for a present to become a past, it has to be in the present, but be determined as something that has past. Thus, if everything past is already constituted in the present, then, every present must pass and every present is already a past when it is being presented.

The theory of the pure past points to the 'nature' of a becoming present. As the past exists for itself, it passes every 'prior' present, as well as substantiates the possibility of each 'new' present to come. Inevitably, Deleuze's conception of pure past brings to mind Bergson's idea of the virtual (i.e., being real without being actual). If the notion of 'virtualness' is to be taken into account, the following assumption applies. Although the past presupposes the present, the virtualness of virtuality initiates a 'reality' in which both virtual past and present co-exist. The pure past, and only the pure past, belongs to this ideality.

The discussion summarises its interpretation of Deleuze's first and second syntheses of time before going on to present a third. The first synthesis posits the continuity of a present: the actualisation of presents connotes the presentness of the present. The second synthesis posits a past that engages with a present: the actualisation

of a virtual present that is past. While the first synthesis refers to a difference that emerges from moments that pass on simultaneously, the second synthesis foregrounds a difference that differs from itself. As such, the presentness of the 'present' is being presented on two levels. In the first synthesis, present is being expanded in a singular forward-looking continuum. And, in the second synthesis, the present is being condensed into the multiple-ness of past possibilities (i.e., virtual). Unlike the synthesis of habit, which constitutes the past and future as asymmetrical elements of the present, the synthesis of remembering constitutes the present in a pure past (Deleuze, *Difference* 103). In sum, the present is at once actual and virtual and present and past.

If the first and second syntheses are means to explicate 'what time is', the third synthesis is an attempt to ascertain 'what time does'. Deleuze's third synthesis of time puts forward that present time is constituted by past and future time. A trinity that is singularised as one, the future coexists with the past as it passes on to become the present-past: the eternal production of something new: the becoming of time. As such, central to the three syntheses is the concept of repetition. After all, "time is constituted only in the originary synthesis which operated on the repetition of instants" (Deleuze, *Difference* 91). The following paragraph demonstrates the affinity between time and repetition.

In the first synthesis, time is comparable to a circle. Time passes on cyclically since its repetition is borne out of 'habit' (Deleuze, *Difference* 90-96; 101-102). This passive synthesis of moments accumulates "time as a living present, and the past and the future as dimensions of this present" (*Difference* 97). In the second synthesis, time is comparable to a straight line. Time is relieved of its circularity because "memory" entails

the possibility of having experienced something. A repetitive remembering that recollects the past, this “synthesis of memory may be regarded as the principle of representation under [a] double aspect: reproduction of the former present *and* reflection of the present present” (*Difference* 102). In the third synthesis, time is comparable to an “empty form” (*Difference* 111). Because of the absence of a ‘present’, this ‘not-there’ becomes a ‘there’ for the repeated precipitation of itself.

Hence, under the pretext of being the same (be it of difference, or repetition), the virtual unites with the actual. That is to say, an instant is realised within the dynamism of the virtual past, actual present and virtual-actual future. As mentioned before, in spite of their conceptual independence the virtual and actual enjoin to make the present, real.

Concisely, the becoming of a be-coming instant is expressed as:

$$\frac{\text{virtual/real(actualisation)}}{\text{actual/real(actualisation)}} - \frac{\text{virtual/real(actualisation)}}{\text{actual/real(actualisation)}}$$

This schema suggests that becoming is neither circular nor linear. The result of this proposition is the actualisation of an actualising multiplicity of multiplicities. According to Deleuze, this heterogeneity sums up what time is. Of time’s pure state, he says, “This is how the story of time ends: by undoing its too well centred natural or physical circle and forming a straight line which then, led by its own length, reconstitutes an eternally decentred circle” (Deleuze, *Difference* 141).

Hence, time is characterised by the passing instant of past-present-future synthesis: the momentariness of event. In this conception, the effect of time returns to the present as a yet-to-be experienced experience. For instance, the equivalent of time is the aftermath of having suffered a ‘shock’, or ‘trauma’. Some experiences that have already been pre-registered in the psyche will become apparent only at a later stage. Similarly, all

that present time encompasses (i.e., the past and future) already exists within its very trace of presentness. And so the manifestation of ‘all that must already exist’ depends on the event of becoming. As such, there is only a single time. A *one time* that includes the presentable past and present within the presentness of itself.

Chapter Six: *An Interpretation of Interpretations of Space*

Chapter Six of this dissertation seeks to delineate how space might be an effect, as well as a (pre)condition of existence. Similar to Chapter Five, which discusses the concept of time, the intention of this current discussion is not to describe ‘what space is’. Instead, central to the discussion will be how space creates and is created (with)in the re-un-folding of an event. This premise assumes that space becomes ‘space’ because it ‘becomes’ through an immanent unfolding of actual/virtual relations. In short, space is construed to be an (pure) affect that produces an (pure) effect—a dynamic and creative production in itself.

Subsequently, there is no reason to try and determine a specific measure or parametre of space. For instance, Henri Lefebvre comments that the marker, ‘space’, carries with it a “geometrical meaning” (1). He says the idea that ‘space’ evokes is “simply that of an empty area. In scholarly use it was generally accompanied by some such epithet as ‘Euclidean’, ‘isotropic’, or ‘infinite’, and the general feeling was that the concept of space was ultimately a mathematical one” (Lefebvre 1). Lefebvre’s comments seem justifiable if Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity, which concerns space and time, is taken into consideration. Although the intricacies behind Einstein’s equations and interpretations of relativity are important to an understanding of ‘what space is’, the object of the discussion at hand is not about how space and time crystalise to produce the ‘fourth dimension’. Instead, the focus of this discussion seeks to examine ‘space’ as something that exists in its own right—space-in-itself.

The strategy of approaching space as an independent substance is not new. Prior to contributions put forward by the likes of Hendrick Lorentz, Einstein and Hermann Minkowski, which have helped develop a singular space-time concept, ‘space’ and ‘time’ are studied as separate, though interdependent substances. In fact, Kant holds that it is through categories like those of ‘space’ and ‘time’ that the senses are able to make an interpretation of the surroundings.

Questions concerning the concept of space have posed significant challenges to Greek philosophers, such as Heraclitus, Parmenides and Aristotle. They include ‘Can space be measured, or is it part of the measurement system?’, ‘Is it an ontological entity itself?’ and ‘Is it a framework conceptualised for the purpose of understanding this world?’. As it stands, ‘space’, like ‘time’ and ‘matter’, is assumed to be a basic substance that makes up the comprehensible (i.e., empirical) part of the world. They are conceived to be both infinitely wide and divisible. But in view that space, like time, remains imperceptible via any known mode of perception it cannot be thought of as ‘real’.

According to Descartes, the mind dictates comprehension, and, hence, interpretation. Moreover, since the conception of space (and time) reflects the primacy of the mind, he asserts that space must be unlimited (while time is the means by which the mind accounts for a specified duration). Thus, Descartes rationalises that space is ‘absolute’. That is, space encompasses every matter (i.e., object and subject): it contains all extended things (i.e., *res extensa*) and thinking things (i.e., *res cogitans*) as well as the body and mind. In other words, Descartes purports that every ‘thing’ is spatially extended. This proposition extrapolates that all matter are compounds made up of basic particles. Thus, in principle, regardless of how small some ‘thing’ is, it can still be

divided into even smaller parts. So, space is some ‘thing’ that totalises all that exists?

Although Descartes thinks that space is an absolute entity because every thing else is encompassed within its independency, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz argues otherwise.

The following is an outline of Leibniz’s argument. Assuming that space is absolute, then every ‘space’ is indiscernible from every other ‘space’. In this case, how is it possible to distinguish between two extrinsic spaces, which must exist in two different locations? Also, if two spaces are alike in all aspects, they are actually the same and not two entities. As such, Leibniz concludes that no one space is ever a replica of another. He proposes that because all compounds are constructed out of a combination of basic particles, the constituents of all things must ultimately be ‘simple’ and ‘non-extended’. As he believes that ‘space’ is not a fundamental feature of the comprehensible (i.e., the ‘material’ world), it must be understood as an immaterial substance (or what Leibniz calls, ‘monad’⁶³). That is, space is some ‘thing’ that is located within a thing itself and also of all other things that are relative to it. Thus, being not-real, space is but an intrinsic reference for keeping track of all that occur in the empirical phenomenon.

Leibniz’s theory of space foregrounds two salient features. First, because space is situated in a thing, or is relative to other things, there is no absolute space. Second, because space is not in itself ‘real’, it must be an ‘ideal’. Subsequently, the correlations that space initiate stands as irreducible relations ‘outside’ to substances (i.e., space exhibits itself as a thing that is relative in itself). These two features suggest that ‘space’

⁶³ In *Monadology* (1714), Leibniz theorises that the universe consists of infinite substances called ‘monads’. He defines a monad as an elementary substance that cannot be further divided. This theory is applied to his discussions concerning perception and consciousness, which are supposed to govern reason and truth.

is, by and large, a concept for perceiving certain ‘virtual’ relation(s) between one substance and another. That is, space is some ‘thing’ that helps place the co-existence of substances in a comprehensible order. In other words, though space is not ‘sensible’, it is a presence that presents the virtuality of actual differences between substances. Furthermore, this also means that without things/substances, ‘space’ will cease to ‘exist’ (or, be presented as present). Hence, central to Leibniz’s theory is the denial of space and its substantiveness.

Leibniz and his ‘relational’ concept of space find continuity in the work of Kant. In fact, Kant’s initial proposition on the notion of space is formulated with such close reference to his predecessor’s that it may be considered as a strict regurgitation of Leibnizian theory. Nevertheless, in spite of his clear admiration for Leibniz, a study into the theories concerning absolute space (e.g., Descartes and Isaac Newton) convinces him that space is not merely some ‘thing’ which determines the relations between substances.

Kant explicates the constitution of space (and time) in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. He examines whether space is a “real” existence, or is it only a “pure intuition” (Kant 158). A point to note: the accelerated proliferation of mathematical and philosophical theories during Kant’s time must have contributed to the difficulty of explicating what space is. To a large extent, a discussion on the issue of ‘what is space’ generates two conflicting schools of thoughts. On the one hand, Newtonian Euclidean geometry perpetrates an absolute and real sense of space. That is, space is a substantive thing that contains all things; everything takes place within the realm of space. On the other hand, Leibnizian rationality argues for a relational theory of space. As observed earlier on in this chapter, relational theory considers the conception of space as ‘ideal’.

The attempt to reconcile the respective theories which the Newtonians and the Leibnizians hold leads Kant to develop what he calls a ‘Copernican revolution’ when thinking about space. Of this new perspective, Kant says,

Up to now it has been assumed that all our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to find out something about them *a priori* through concepts that would extend our cognition have, on this pre-supposition, come to nothing. Hence let us once try whether we do not get farther with the problems of metaphysics by assuming that the objects must conform to our cognition, which would agree better with the requested possibility of an *a priori* cognition of them, which is to establish something about objects before they are given to us. This would be just like the first thoughts of Copernicus, who, when he did not make good progress in the explanation of the celestial motions if he assumed that the entire celestial host revolves around the observer, tried to see if he might not have greater success if he made the observer revolve and left the stars at rest.

(110)

Due to the fact that ‘objects must conform to cognition’ (because “cognition must conform to the objects” in return), Kant perceives space to be a substance that is dependent on the subjective condition of “sensibility” (160). Thus, ‘space’ is that which helps a subject organise, analyse and interpret information concerning his/her immediate surroundings. But, because space is not an empirical concept derived from “the relations of outer appearance through experiences” (158), it is neither objective, nor self-subsisting. In short, “space is a necessary representation, *a priori*, which is the ground of

outer intuitions. [This is to say], one can never represent that there is no space, although one can very think that there are no objects to be encountered in it” (158).

Hence, Kant’s ‘Copernican revolution’ succeeds in arbitrating the disagreement between ‘absolute’ and ‘relational’ theories of space. He concurs with Newton that space is absolute for objects that exist within a subjective experience (e.g., phenomenal experiences that scientific inquiry attests to). He also agrees with Leibniz that space is nothing for objects that exist apart from the subject (i.e., ‘things- in-themselves’). Thus, Kant situates space as an *a priori* “For neither absolute nor relative determinations can be intuited prior to the existence of the things to which they pertain” (159). Moreover, it is impossible to represent an ‘absent space’ to a subject because this ‘absence’ will have to owe itself to the emptiness of objects themselves (160-161)⁶⁴. However, if a subject is unable to represent to him/herself the absence of space, how can ‘space’ be conceived then? What prompts the unfolding of space?

The idea of a ‘subject’ is interpretable on two levels: a subject that possesses individualised thoughts and passion, and an incorporeal entity that facilitates in the actualisation of events. Nevertheless, on both levels, a subject is constituted via the process of subjectification⁶⁵. For the sake of simplicity as well as clarity, markers ‘s’ and ‘S’ are employed to denote ‘subject as an individual’ and ‘subject as an incorporeal

⁶⁴ Kant puts forward that “The transcendental concept of appearances in space [. . .] is a critical reminder that absolutely nothing that is intuited in space is a thing in itself, and that space is not a form that is proper to anything in itself, but rather that objects in themselves are not know to us at all, and that what we call outer objects are nothing other than mere representations of our sensibility, whose form is space, but whose true correlate, i.e., thing in itself, is not and cannot be cognised through them, but is also never asked after in experience” (161-162). Nevertheless, how is *x* to be recognised as ‘*x*’ then? A variant of *x* must already be within the possibilities of *xs* so that *x* can become ‘*x*’ in its own unfolding.

⁶⁵ The subject produces and is, in turn, produced by a sphere of social constructs (e.g., ideology).

entity' respectively. So, is the realisation of s/S situated 'to' or 'in' the production of spatial relations?

In the first case, where s/S is construed as in relation 'to' something (e.g., a 'product' of a social practice), transcendentalness directs the investigation. Thus, intelligible experience is garnered through a host of (*a priori*) faculties, including reason, consciousness and perception. For instance, Kant considers these universal attributes as senses that assist in the interpretation of possible sensibilities, which are being offered by the phenomena. This perspective implies the two following assumptions. First, transcendentalness produces 'empiricalness' as it is impossible to differentiate between *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge. Second, s/S is instituted by a synthesis of experiences for the interpretation of the perceivable depends on the intelligible.

In the second case, where s/S is construed as 'in' relation to something (e.g., 'producing' a social practice) immanence underpins the investigation. While immanence points to a presence that permeates material existence, the deployment of the marker here appeals to an alternative understanding. That is, immanence is associated with a synthesis which is both singular and plural⁶⁶. So, whilst the singularity of s/S is always related to shifting contexts, such as socio-politics, interpretation and subjectivity, its singularness perpetuates a constant. For instance, S/s returns to transform s/S, and vice versa (c.f., Nietzsche and the eternal return). Nevertheless, again, this returning is not the infinite return of a same. Rather, this re-turning is the repetition of a difference, of an undeterminable s/S: the multiplicity of 's', 'S' and 's/S'.

⁶⁶ Here, the concept of 'singularness' is understood as the singularities that belong to the singularities of others (Deleuze, *The Fold* 86). This concept correlates with Deleuze's 'difference' and 'repetition'.

Hence, central to the immanent ‘in’ are differential and deferential relations. Further, this immanence describes a synthesis that encompasses all potential actualisations. This refers to the becoming of events, or the eternal return of some ‘thing’. Therefore, the ‘in-ness’ of immanence foregrounds the oneness between relations and relations. For instance, s is ‘ s ’ because it is not z . Furthermore, s is ‘ s ’ because s is not-yet-present. As such, the continual alteration between $s_2, s_3, s_4 \dots s_x$ is made possible by the fact that there is no ‘ s ’ to begin with. In addition, the passings between say ‘ s_2 and s_3 ’, and ‘ s_3 and s_4 ’ are not interpreted as a ‘transition’ between two somethings. Otherwise these markers will cease to signify a ‘becoming’ and just ‘be’. For instance, s_2 is consistently in a dynamic process of transformation and actualisation without ever entering into the state of ‘ s_2 ’ (i.e., s_2 can be represented as s_2). In short, becoming ensures the repeatability of difference in a field of dynamic immanence. This dynamism is made possible only because something is always missing (c.f., the not-present).

The heterogeneity that becoming professes denotes neither a point of departure nor a point of arrival. And, what defines the singularity of immanence’s becoming is a matrix of multiplicity, which establishes a non-exhaustive space; a continuum that is defined by a constant relating, unfolding and becoming: virtual space. According to Deleuze, “the reality of the virtual consists of the differential elements and relations along with the singular points which correspond to them. The reality of the virtual is a [‘real’] structure” (*Difference* 260). That is to say, the future-past of all potential actualities are contained within the virtualness of space. As a sum of every possible relation, unfolding and becoming, the virtual is essentially “a centre which would unify other centres” (Deleuze, *Difference* 260).

In a Deleuzian sense, the study of space is an explication of several interrelated problems then. These include how the becoming of multiplicities differ and defer within virtual space, how phenomena comprising the ‘virtual’ must be characterised as a ‘not-present’ and how the virtual is a plane which refracts singularities that extend a network of pluralness. Manuel DeLanda explicates this understanding of the virtual in the following remarks:

The virtual continuum would be, as it were, *a space of spaces*, with each its component spaces having the capacity of progressive differentiation. Beside this multiplication of spaces, we need a way of meshing these together into a heterogeneous whole. Deleuze, in fact, refers to the virtual continuum as a *plane of consistency* [. . .] consistency is defined as *the synthesis of heterogeneities as such*.

(78)

DeLanda observes that the virtual denotes ‘corporeal’ causes because its becoming depends on the actualisation of material processes. Furthermore, he notes that the virtual is autonomous; it is therefore ‘incorporeal’. That is, within the virtuality of space, the relationships between the multiplicity of multiplicities are ‘quasi-causal’. For instance, an event exists within the virtual; but, the potentiality of this event does not represent the virtual in turn. Hence, the virtual “does not result from any limitation of a pre-existing possibility” (Deleuze, *Difference* 264). As such, “for a potential or virtual object, to be actualised is to create divergent lines which correspond to—without resembling—a virtual multiplicity”. (264)

To conclude, the virtual is actualised within the becoming of differentiation. Deleuze proposes that “each differentiation is a local integration or a local solution which then connects with others in the overall solution or the global integration” (*Difference* 262). He elaborates on this “integration” by pointing out that “The actualisation of the virtual [. . .] always takes place by difference, divergence or differentiation. [. . .] For a potential or virtual object, to be actualised is to create divergent line which correspond to—without resembling—a virtual multiplicity” (264). For instance, interpretations emerge as part of past and/or future interpretations that have/or will occur. And, because the actualisation the virtual is not pre-determined by fixity, its dynamic unfolding is sustained by a constructing unconstruct.

As such, the conventional notion of perceiving space as a homogeneous whole, within which events unfold, requires reassessing. While ‘space’ is presented as unified, its ‘wholesomeness’ is composed of heterogeneous passings (i.e., the unfolding of infinite becomings). In this immanent spatiality, becoming’s ‘multilinearity’ “[. . .] can fold back on itself with intersections and inflections that interconnect [. . .] As though these are so many twists in the path of something moving through space like a whirlwind that can materialise at any point” (Deleuze, *Negotiations* 161). As such, the internal difference of becoming-in-itself develops within a chain of diverging refractions and through this dislocation, the virtualness of a potential is actualised.

A product of interactions between the ‘was present’, ‘present’ and ‘to be present’, the event of some ‘thing’ happening points to a particular *a priority*. Hence, the concept of space must be understood as empirically transcendental. This is because the occurrence of an event takes place within the conditions of a real event occurring. Unlike

Kant's transcendental space, which omits logical and empirical bases, the sensibilities of an empirical transcendentalness of space preclude conditions that constitute 'real' events. Thus, the extension of space bears an unfolding that opens up new potentialities, relations and planes.

In short, the 'spatiality' of space lies outside of the fields that determine it. As space becomes itself, it affectively embraces the differentiating and deferentiating. The manifestation of this event creates the plane of space which folds upon itself in order to articulate itself. In light of the current discussion, 'space' neither determines the moments when $s_2, s_3, s_4 \dots s_x$ take place nor asserts the movements that produce the passings between 's₂ and s₃', and 's₃ and s₄'. Instead, from the constitutions of space-to-space, its spatialness is interpretable as a boundless refraction. That is, an infinitude which is tantamount to a thousand plateaus.

CONCLUSION—An Abandoning

Sections One and Two of this dissertation are attempts to examine the constituents that occupy the subject of hermeneutics. Specifically, Section One offers a perspective of the conditions that the interpretative casts. And, Section Two exemplifies the production and manifestation of interpretation(s). Altogether, sections one and two assert two salient points: everything is subjugated to the interpretability of the interpretable (i.e., there is nothing ‘outside’ of interpretation) and the interpretative proliferates a multiplicity of interpretations (i.e., the plurality of a singular interpretation).

Since the plurality of interpretation creates what there is and what can be, every ‘thing’ unfolds from a fundamental force: the principle of deference and difference. That is, the potentiality of any given thing is interpreted in terms of what is created and what is to be created. The dissertation at hand tries to demonstrate this concept of interpretation by applying it to a variety of activities, as well as examples that are ‘perceivable’ (i.e., the observable) in nature. These include: Chad and his interpretation of the photographs; optometric phenomena like the ebbing of tide and the refraction of light; interpretations of concepts like time and space; and readings of authors, such as Deleuze and Bergson, and excerpts from *Heart of Darkness* and ‘The Flea’. Basically, these discussions try to demonstrate how ↕ deference is a ‘creative’ and ‘positive’ process. In difference
each instance, some new ‘thing’ is created because the act of interpretation is essentially a dynamic activity.

To a large extent, this dissertation has been about the correlation between deference, difference and the being of interpretation. Generally speaking, it implies the following: every possibility is created through an infinite force that is expressed *within* a pure medium. Although the concept of ‘withinness’, or ‘immanence’, appears to be Deleuzian in essence, the present dissertation offers an extended understanding of these markers. In short, I have equated be-*ing* (of interpretation) with a material virtualness: the no-thing. According to Peter Hallward, “Deleuze’s philosophy is best described as an exercise in creative *indiscernment*” and the latter pays careful attention to the mechanics of material or actual creations only because he seeks to invent suitable means of escaping them (3). However, I argue that the “mechanics of material” or “actual creations” are materialised or actualised within the presentness of a not-present. In other words, there can be no escape from the no-thing. That is, interpretation becomes when it is actualised in its own virtuality; only by becoming interpretable can interpretation fully realise the potential of \updownarrow deference difference which its very being attests. Hence, the being of interpretation unfolds within a virtual-reality that relates, constitutes and expresses it through itself in itself.

In view that different aspects of interpretation are dealt with in sections one and two of this dissertation, the present discussion, which endeavours to conclude the entire work, will address the issues that have been raised separately. Therefore, there will be two parts to this dissertation’s *Conclusion*.

Part One of the conclusion will probe how and why interpretation is, in itself, a dynamic process. That is, how and why does an interpretation function the way it does (i.e., a study of how interpretation functions as a function—its functionality). Basically,

the discussion will foreground the notion that interpretations are themselves aspects of a limitless creative force. Thus if the interpretative is indeed ‘creative’ in essence, it can only become through an actualisation of the virtual. Furthermore, the evolution of interpretation’s restless creativity is expressed through an infinite differing and deferring creation: a creativity that is presented by the unrepresentability of a no-thing.

Part Two of the conclusion will probe into how and why interpretation is a dynamic process (with)in-itself. That is, what makes the event of interpretation a confluence of instantaneous productions (i.e., a study of how interpretation functions as an entity—its being). The discussion intends to highlight how the interpretable is a product of a synthesis of inter- and intra- acting forces; a producing which points to an internal intra-action. And, because interpretation is some thing that becomes in the state of something ‘happening’, it is constituted by the yet-to-be-determined (or, the ‘undeterminate’). Hence, the interpretative is (re)affirmed through some ‘thing’ that (re)differentiates, (re)deferentiates and (re)creates; an eternal returning re-turning. In context of this dissertation, the nature of interpretation is ascribed within a single multiplicity which re-un-folds into itself: —*ing*.

Part One

The general argument of this dissertation proposes that the act of interpretation yields a gyre of unlimitedness. In other words, all virtualities as well as actualities are composed by a single productive force: the infinite be-coming of becoming. The implication of this singularity is that every thing is the ‘same’ in one way or another. Deleuze call this the “single voice” (*Difference* 44) that encompasses possibilities in a multiplicity of multiplicities—univocity. Thus, the singularity of the interpretable, for example, refers to the fact that there is essentially no difference between interpretations. All interpretations being equal, every interpretation is exactly ‘the’ interpretation. Consequently, if interpretations exist in a singularity, then, there can only be one source of creation. That is, the unfolding of the actual/virtual within an immanent. For instance, the production and co-existence of interpretations are re-presented by a consistent plane which is characterised by an inclusive singular pluralness.

Nevertheless, the constancy of ‘the singular’ does not imply a straightforward uniformity. In fact, the infinite becoming of the ‘unlimited’ points to a creation that is effected by a repeated differencing. So, the ‘actualisations’ of virtualities are really re-constitutions of potentialities that underlie the passing of transformations upon transformations. The dynamism of reconstitution’s irreducible state signals the syntheses of becomings that are affirmed within their becoming. For instance, distinct strands of creative trajectories compose the act of interpretation, which is essentially the exercise of interpreting the interpretable. The basis of creating or producing interpretations is constituted by self-reference then. This reliance on interpretation-in-itself is precisely the condition that enables self-creativity. That is, interpretation itself manifests every othered

interpretation in a continuum of \updownarrow deference (i.e., a repeated differentiality of difference

of differences). Thus affirming the interpretative is not merely an affirmation of its interpretability. Instead, the interpretative itself is its own presentness and this very presence creates and entails interpretabilities.

In view of the above perspective, the immanent nature of the creative engages an immediacy that exhibits entire unfoldings all-at-once. Self-generating and self-sustaining, the instantaneity of the immediate advances the seamless unfolding of a creativity which singularises binary distinctions, such as difference and identity and becoming and being. So, for example, an x_3 is not a differentiation from an x_2 that, presumably, comes before it. Rather, x_3 and x_2 pass on within a same moment in a single plane of differences. When the interpretative is conceived of in this manner, an interpretation is not set against an 'Original Interpretation'. The one-ness of interpretations presupposes that the interpretative is the primary creative force which constitutes itself in \updownarrow deference. And, difference this homogeneous immediacy sanctions a timeless production that proliferates diverse passings in and through repeatable differencing/repetitive difference.

By connecting creation to a fundamental oneness, it foregrounds a self-perpetuating creativity that is immanently singular. This assertion also implies that the creative gathers a boundless unfolding within its fold. That is, nothing mediates creativity since its be-ing/be-coming is a 'unity', whereby the 'inside' is no more than a folding of the 'outside'. Thus, to create is to re/un/fold that which is outside inside. As such, creativity does not create any thing other than itself and creation does not create any thing that is the same. Consequently, every re-recreation is a recreation of and in itself.

Therefore, each re-recreation is an event, a distinct aspect, of a limitless whole. For instance, an interpretation is unique as well as an interpretation-in-itself. Nevertheless, the many divergent interpretations are facets that realise the wholesomeness of the interpretative. Hence, interpretability and its creativeness construct a relationship of the interpretable in (and 'to') its 'self'.

The assumption of an inward-looking creativity articulates an immediateness that expresses the multiplicity of many-ness in a singular one. However, 'one' does not displace 'many' because the creative plane is a consistent plane upon which all creations assemble. Because the ability 'to create' is defined by moment-to-moment precipitation, this force is perceived as 'intra'- rather than 'inter'-related (i.e., moments that intra-relate). Since multiple-ness is a symptom of the singular, the many-folds of creativity cannot be separated from the unified re-un-folding of itself. This unity of the plural and singular denotes two things. First, the plural is a manifestation that constitutes the singular. Second, the plural is itself singular. For instance, the interpretability of the interpretable must be deciphered as an indivisible continuity of interpretations within interpretations. Only when the interpretative is conceived of as an undividable, uninterrupted and continuing whole can its evolution be immediate, single and becoming. In other words, the 'totality' of interpretation divides into itself upon its 'self'. However, the infinite division of this 'self' is in itself indivisible.

Hence, the creatable is expressed within a unified totality. Furthermore, the wholesomeness of this unity is entrenched within the unequal co-existences of equal unities and unities⁶⁷. The present thesis is supported by three assumptions. First, the

⁶⁷ Deleuze says, "In effect, the essential in univocity is not that Being is said in a single and same sense, but that it is said, in a single and same sense, *of* all its individuating differences or intrinsic modalities. Being is

presence of the pre-existent is not justified by an *a priori* (in the Kantian sense). For instance, the interpretative itself does not denote a whole. Instead, interpretations themselves pass on to deliver a perspective of the interpretable interpretative. Thus, it is through multiplicable relations that existences, including the creative and interpretative, become creatable. Second, the unity between unities and unities is but a transcendent totality. That is, the notion of ‘totalness’ is illusory. Therefore, for example, interpretation is an act that problematises the interpretative. As the interpretative changes through the interpretable, ultimately, it is the disjunctive that orientates the relations between interpretations and interpretations⁶⁸. Third, because unities are produced by particular constructs, they vary from moment to moment within a moment-in-moment. So, a unity is essentially produced within the disunited. The unity of the interpretative, for example, results from the kinds of interpretations there can/could be. Thus, the wholesomeness of unity is produced by the variations of the interpretable. While the homogeneity of the united is not a given (i.e., there is no *a priori*), its wholesomeness is maintained by a consistent becoming.

The proposition, creativity is not a ‘whole’ in any traditional sense of the marker, suggests that it must be construed as yet-to-be-completed, notwithstanding, being already-completed. That is, the creative is a continual intensification of an immanent becoming, becoming itself. Because creativity is always in the state of being presented, this work-in-progress points to a notion of the unrepresentable.

the same for all these modalities, but these modalities are not the same. It is ‘equal’ for all, but they themselves are not equal. It is said of all in a single sense, but they themselves do not have the same sense” (*Difference* 45).

⁶⁸ I.e., the producibility of the disjunctive is dependent on repeatable differences. Deleuze speaks about the concept of disjunctive synthesis in *Difference and Repetition* as well as *Anti-Oedipus*.

In other words, the wholeness of creativity is to be thought of as non-presentable and non-actual: the virtual. A present that can never be fully present, the virtuality of the creative brings about an actualisation that it does not identify with. That is, the virtual cannot become the actualised. Hence, the creation that produces differentiability and deferentiality stems from the non-presence of the virtual. And, what the virtual proliferates creates the past-present-future all at once. As such, the actual creative present passes on because all possible creative presents are already presented within the past and future. Also, in all past actual creative presents, including the past creative that has never been presented (i.e., the past virtual creative), the entire past creative is conserved in itself. While the virtuality of the creative is an actualisation of a repeatable difference, this creating is, nonetheless, a creation of the yet-to-come. Thus, in its perpetual unfolding, creation resists against full presentability. This resistance results in the departure from that which is conclusive. Even when the creative present presents itself as an actual, it is because the actuality of this presentness passes itself on as presentable instant.

For instance, although both the interpreted and interpretable are part of the interpretative, they bear different intensions of the constitution. The interpreted is an 'actual' that represents the 'definite' aspect of an interpretable. And, the continuity of this interpretability is affirmed by an actuality that bears the possibility for actualising an actualisation. Therefore, the interpreted is an actuality that unfolds (or, is an effect of) from its own potentiality. In other words, the interpretable is the 'virtual' that produces the eternal returning of that which is to become 'the interpretative'. So, a becoming that

returns to synthesise, become and affect the potentiality of virtualness. That is, the interpretable is not merely some repeatable ‘return’. Rather, it is in itself a returning affirmed by multiplicity. Hence, the interpretative is in essence a self- \uparrow deference that difference refracts through a virtuality which actualises an ‘itself’ by be-coming.

In short, the actualness of creativity is the constituted, whilst its virtualness is its constituent. That is, creation’s ‘created-ness’ and ‘creating-ness’ result from three independent, but interrelated premises. First, the returning immediacy that composes the ‘to-be-created’ is a catalyst for restless re/un/foldings. A source that re-reproduces unlimited possibilities, the immediacy of each possibility (i.e., fold) synthesises within it all conceivable potentials and generates all plausible creations. Thus, the immediate is an immanent force that multiplies via self-determining. And, the spontaneity of this immediateness points to a presentness that cancels out any mediation by a transcendent.

As such, the second premise is an account of the dynamic (non)presentability of the immediate. That is, creativity is presented as, in-itself, not presentable. After all, if the creative is presented as some ‘thing’, then it will become ‘something’ eventually. But, in tandem with the current argument, the act of creating expresses a quality that is ‘verb-like’. Similar to the ‘infinitive’, while charting its course of actualisation, creation functions as a substantive that is independent of any particular actualising. So, creativity is both the creation that articulates the creatable, as well as the creatable that gives rise to the creation.

Consequently, the final premise of creativity is associated with the notion of circularity. The concept of relentless returning is crucial to the intension of immediacy and non-presentability. Because each creating is a creation that differs and defers,

creativity cannot be grounded as ‘c-r-e-a-t-i-v-i-t-y’. Nevertheless, since creation is affirmed by a differencing(/deferencing) deference(/difference), its abandonment of being ‘c-r-e-a-t-i-o-n’ anticipates the arrival at an ever-returning return. This eternal re-turning produces every ‘thing’ that differs, especially the synthesis of being/becoming that is affirmed in be-coming/multiplicity.

Thus, the actualisation of an interpretation is an actuality insofar as it is indeed an actual. And, the interpretative is a production that expands upon the generative dynamism of the interpretable. That is, upon a plane of immanence, ‘to interpret’ fortifies spontaneity, openness and experimentation. A force that articulates the unrepresentable, the interpretable is construed as some ‘thing’ that passes through a repeatability, whereby its creativity is constituted by differencing. As such, that which is inherent of the interpretative is a constant evolvment passing through achronological displacements. Thus, the becoming of interpretations maintains the interpretable in an event of undeterminacy.

Since creativity, in this case, of interpretation, is understood as a ceaseless unfolding within a multiplicity, then, the ‘created’ is some ‘thing’ that proceeds from an in-between to yet another in-between (i.e., it is not a linear progression from a start to an end). As creativeness opens itself to, effect, affects, it is affected upon, in effect. Clearly, this re/un/foldability of the creative precludes a ‘lacking’; it is this ‘absence’ that prompts the layering of creatables upon creatables within the creation of a creativity.

Subsequently, the creative is only creating on the condition that it refers to the ‘absent’. It is an absence that the creatable defers to as well as differs from. Because every creation bears an ‘absence’ that defines it, this ‘not-there’ must encompass all possible foldings.

Hence, the absent is a virtuality that creates the creatable because the to-be-created remains yet-to-be-created. The unrepresentability of the absent points to a departure from, firstly, Plato and his notion of an Ideal form, and, secondly, Aristotle and his notion of difference. An abandonment which sets it apart from the whole Platonic and Aristotelian legacy, the 'absent' proposed here points to a 'no-thing' that is free from any 'outside', 'difference from another' and 'subjugation' (i.e., subjected to, for example, identity, dualism and resemblance). The absent which this discussion perpetrates proceeds from itself, within itself. Subsequently, the virtualness of the absent is conceivable only through the *insideness* of its own infinite unfolding. Ultimately, this autonomy refracts a host of diverse permutations which reflect a spontaneity that is inherent of creativity.

Thus, it is possible to re-recreate interpretations because the interpretative is in essence polysemic. That is, being always overdetermined, the interpretable is in possession of excessive meanings. And, the possibilities that an interpretation yields stem from a 'lack'. As a matter of fact, the momentary passings of in-betweenness between interpretations and interpretation demonstrate the presence of an absent, which in turn affirms the no-thing. As the interpretative 'lacks' an objective (and so there is no '**the** interpretation' to speak of), its actualisation must rely upon the production of a refolding and unfolding folding. In view of this constitution, interpretation is not some 'thing' that is already itself, then. An interpretation is some 'thing' that comes into being through becoming. Therefore, the interpretative is not bound by a determined locus of meanings. Because of its 'slippery' nature, the making of an interpretation transcends the limitation of a specific signification. Therefore, the interpretative is described as a shifting field of

interrelations, where interpretations are intertextually expressed within an interweaving multiplicity of intra-pretations.

Although the creator of ‘things’, including the creative and interpretative, can neither be presented nor be determined, its virtuality accounts for the in-between actualisations of ‘things’. In context of this dissertation, the virtual creator may be thought of as a difference of repeatable ‘nothing’. In other words, the repeatability of the not-present is a repetition of the ‘different’. For instance, two interpretations that repeat must be different; but being repetitions, they must be considered conceptually identical. Therefore, whilst the interpretative is representable, the difference between one interpretation and another is non-representable. Nevertheless, is the repeatable ‘real’? Also, can there be non-representable difference?

So, for example, if the marker, ‘cat’, can be fully characterised by a concept denoted by ‘c-a-t’, then, ‘cat’ will refer to one specific thing. In this case, because a marker is affirmed as some ‘thing’ (i.e., instead of being ‘free’, difference bears a denomination), there would be no difference or repetition. Thus, the interpretability of ‘cat’ depends on the uncompleteness of the concepts that the marker can be made to bear—a repeatable conceptless difference. As such, the repetition of ‘cat’ does not presuppose a determinable concept. Instead, the repeatability of ‘cat’ is dependent on the fact that there are differential yet-to-be-completed concepts, yet-to-come-possibilities and yet-to-come-becomings: an expression of pure no-thingness.

Though the interpretative does not acquire a new sense here⁶⁹, this dissertation is an attempt to work on the concept of interpreting from a ‘yet-to-be-ness’ (i.e., the unrepresentable). And so, the logic of no-thingness is the result of a wish to distant the thesis from modes that are ‘representational’ and ‘determinable’. For instance, the arguments do not assert one version of truth over another, or try to deduce categories of the *a priori* kind, or reduce the undetermined to a fundamental whole. The logic of ‘no-thing’ abandons the particular and the general in exchange for a difference that is reproducible within a plane that unfolds to become. In other words, it is a logic of an interpretation and experience that is yet-to-be-formed. Thus, being neither inductive nor deductive, interpretation and its irreducibility foreground a yet-to-come that will always be creating the creatable: —*ing*. In seeking to exemplify the complexities involving the interpretable, the thesis demonstrates the primacy of a ‘thing’ that perpetrates the continuity of a singular plural.

Specifically the following three characteristics describe the logic of no-thingness. First, the idea of no-thingness presents a yet-to-be-present. Although the absent is a condition that epitomises the ‘no-thing’, this ‘not-there’ does not point to absence per se. As a matter of fact, the absent opens up an event to a multiplicity of events (e.g., the overdetermination of the interpretable). By connecting events and events, the in-betweenness of the varying syntheses make-present possibilities that are immanent, excessive and shifting. Therefore, the unfolding of the no-thing is a ‘present’ that folds within a refolding that is uncentred and divergent.

⁶⁹ The interpretability of the interpretative must already exist in the act of interpreting itself. Thus, the interpretation that results from interpreting any thing is a manifestation of a within immanent of a *withinness*.

Second, the ‘presentness’ that arises from the interrelations which connect a presentation to other presentations suggest a yet-to-come. That is, events occur as happenings rather than outcomes. The relationship between ‘this’ and ‘that’ which takes place in a continuous flow within ‘here’ and ‘there’ points to a departure from determinability. Characterised by the unattributable, the present is a presenting of parts that evolve to become. Thus, no-thingness supposes the unspoken, undetermined and uncomplete which necessitate the ‘speakability’, ‘determinability’ and ‘compleatability’ of a ‘thing’ (e.g., it is possible to interpret the marker ‘cat’ because the signification of ‘c-a-t’ is not already determined).

Third, no-thingness is not an end in itself. The no-thing refracts a singular multiplicity of relations that involve the plural multiplicities of a repeatable difference. In other words, the no-thing does not function as a condition that facilitates the piecing together of differences in a whole. Rather, the no-thingness of the no-thing precludes a wholeness that encompasses the multiplicities of a multiplicity. Hence, the no-thing is a singularity composed by a series of pluralities, which, in turn, is composed within a singularity.

So, the logic of no-thingness is about the actualisation, understanding and interpretation of any ‘something’. Be it the creatable, or interpretable, its becoming is an event that immediately differs from and defers within itself. That is, the withinness of the no-thing automates a self -differentiality and -deferentiality which makes it what it is. A differing and deferring that returns to defer and differ itself within itself, the differed and deferred are immediately the actual, virtual, immanent, and single. Consequently, every ‘something’ connotes the passing of a pure difference and repetition. In this sense, no-

thingness affirms a logic that finds accordance with the restlessness of the positive. And so, the becoming will always be coming: —*ing*. Hence, central to the logic of nothingness is the birth to a differencing and repeating presence. This process of ‘birthing’ can be summed up by Deleuze’s observation on the concepts of difference and repetition. On the subject of the “essence” of the differentiable and repeatable, he says:

Essence is not only particular, individual, but individualising. [. . .] This is because essence is in itself difference. But it does not have the power to diversify, and to diversify itself, without also having the power to repeat itself, identical to itself. What can one do with essence, which is ultimate difference, except to repeat it, since it is irreplaceable and since nothing can be substituted for it? [. . .] Difference and repetition are only apparently in opposition. [. . .] This is because difference as the quality of a world, is affirmed only through a kind of autorepetition which traverses the various media and reunited different objects; repetition constitutes the degrees of an original difference, but also diversity constitutes the levels of a repetition no less fundamental. [. . .] Actually, difference and repetition are two inseparable and correlative powers of essence [. . .] for repetition is the power of difference, no less than difference the power of repetition. [They] become the centre of a system which leaves nothing outside itself [.]

(Deleuze, *Proust* 48-50)

Part Two

The subject of this dissertation concerns interpretation. Its purpose is to understand how to read idiomatic and non-idiomatic markers: a study of hermeneutics. Therefore, the paper discusses a set of issues that is particularly pertinent to its focus of examining ‘what is interpretation’. For the purpose of explicating the interpretative, the dissertation engages with selected topics, including ‘perception’, ‘mental image’ and ‘meaning-making’, as well as selected theorists and the work that they offer, including Nietzsche, Bergson and Deleuze. The purpose of examining the abovementioned topics and theoretical works is to formulate a fundamental framework that will help in the understanding of the explicit indications, implicit assumptions, applicability and limitations of a theory of interpretation. But, in return, how is the interpretative to be placed in the midst of these topics and theories? What does Deleuze mean when he comments that modern life is confronted by a “distribution” that is both mechanical and stereotypical (Deleuze, *Difference* xviii)? What can be said of this automated divergence and displacement? Is there no outside, in the case of this dissertation, of interpretation, then?

From the discussion developed over the course of this dissertation, the following deduction appears sustainable: the interpretative is an expression of be-*ing* through which pure creations can become. For instance, broadly speaking, in order to understand what constitutes ‘perception’, two questions need to be answered. They are ‘how is information obtained’ and ‘how can it be justified as valid’. These questions arise because methods that are used in the gathering of information affect the end result and

‘things’ are not what they appear to be. Because ‘things’ do not exist as just ‘are’, they need to be interpreted. Thus, the interpretative plays a role in constructing a discourse of perception: interpretability is the thinking of the nature of perception-in-itself. In other words, every ‘thing’ which is to become can be attributed to a trace that is interpretative in essence. In short, some thing is interpreted as something because the interpretative produces that very interpretation (‘something’) itself⁷⁰.

Hence, interpretation is the immediacy of be-*ing*. Further, the immediateness of the interpretable is exactly the being of a thing and its difference—the repeatability of the re/un/folding —*ing*; a pure interiority that creates some thing without referring to any thing beyond itself. Therefore, interpretation is always concerned with the event of creating. That is to say, the interpretative is characterised by the actualisation of the undetermined; and, the possibility of creating more and more highlights the workings of the virtual and the infinite. As interpretation is concerned with the virtuality of an actualising event-in-itself, the process of interpreting creates new events via its very own unfolding on its very own plane⁷¹. Hence, through interpretation, the presentability of every moment (or, event) is an affirmation of an indivisible creation. If Bergson’s assertion on the notion of ‘present moment’ is considered, interpretation and its presentness must be the great impulse that underscores the returning dynamism, continuity and variability of an immanent whole (*Creative* 157). As such, the

⁷⁰ Interpretation is not a representation of the various outcomes that may emerge from the activity of reading. The interpretative **is** the very act of reading/interpreting. With reference to Deleuze’s idea of philosophy and deterritorialisation (*Dialogues*, 1987).

⁷¹ Deleuze and Guattari point out that “the task of philosophy when it creates concepts, entities, is always to extract an event from things and beings, to set up the new event from things and beings, always to give them a new event” (*Philosophy?* 33).

interpretative is constituted in the purity of its individual withinness; and so, it sustains a singular (i.e., unilateral) understanding of the *auto nomos*. In fact, Deleuze asserts that

Eternal return or returning expresses the common being of all these metamorphoses, the measure and the common being of all that is extreme, of all the realised degrees of power. It is the being-equal of all that is unequal and has been able to fully realise its inequality. All that is extreme and becoming the same communicates in an equal and common Being which determines its return [. . .] eternal return is the univocity of being, the effective realisation of that univocity. In the eternal return, univocal being is not only thought and even affirmed, but effectively realised.

(Difference 51)

Essentially, this dissertation meditates upon traditional as well as basic questions. They include ‘What is interpretation?’ and ‘How does the interpretative interpret?’⁷². In an attempt to offer prospective answers to these questions, the thesis proposes a perspective that is primarily immanent. That is, the interpretable is demonstrated through an affirmation of interpretation in itself within interpretation-in-itself. For instance, the interpretation of *x* depends on the interpretability of its ‘being’, ‘representability’ and ‘re/un/foldability’—the creation of a creativity. Thus, the becoming of *x* as ‘*x*’ is an affirmation of its own differentiability and deferentiality. As such, the affirmation of *x* is determined through its ability to determine. This ability refers to an immanent force that exists within itself (c.f., Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’ and Deleuze’s ‘affirmation through difference’). Two salient points extrapolate from immanence and its withinness. First, the

⁷² These two questions can be transcribed as ‘What is being?’ and ‘How does thought think?’ which are fundamental questions in the study of philosophy.

act of interpreting is singular though the creating of an interpretation is but a facet of all possible creations: the being of interpretation is always one and the same. As the interpretable is self-perpetuating and absolute, there can only be a single birthing of the re-un-folding: a singular pluralness. Second, interpretation is itself the production of a producing difference and deference that affirms a repeated differentiality of differences: spontaneity underscores the interpretative. Further, the interpretability of interpretation is necessarily arbitrary as the act of interpreting is marked by the involuntary, unconscious and becoming: —*ing*. Hence, it is possible to interpret simply because reading, seeing and meaning-making are expressions of a single action: the absolute force of pure interpretability (c.f., Spinoza's 'univocity of being', 'immanence' and 'expression').

Consequently, this thesis purports that interpretation is the creator of all interrelationships between perception, experience and thought. The interpretability of things creates all 'things', which is really the actualisation of intra(difference-repetition)/(in/tangibility). At this point, it is probably apt to consider the indications of the proposition mentioned here. The issues that concern the question of interpretation, in context of this dissertation, yield an answer which relates the subject to the notion of creativity. That is, interpretation is the medium via which events can be expressed as pure creatives. Subsequently, interpretation and its workings materialise the virtuality of the in/tangible within a state of momentary actualisation. As such, interpretation articulates the unrepresentable through the presentness of that which cannot be presented—the nothing. So, the event of interpretation is a creating that creates within a plane that reinforces the pure and the affirming. This assertion bears the following implications.

First, interpretation connotes ‘work-in-progress’. This to say, an interpretation is always, so to speak, ‘in the making’, rather than being ‘ready made’. Therefore, the motion ‘to interpret’ initiates a ‘process’. After all, if interpretation exists as a ready-made entity, then, it will be subjected to a parametre of limitations. For instance, in Platonic terms, interpretations are but representations of a pre-existent Interpretation. The potential (i.e., the ways in which something can be interpreted) that an interpretation can exhibit is limited because it is deemed to be a mere testament of the ideal Interpretation. If interpretation is purported as an event of pure becoming, it must be understood as a singular (re)create-*ing*-in-itself. Thus, an interpretation is independent of its actualisation as ‘an interpretation’—an interpretation is free from any signification, or actuality. Instead, a concept of what constitutes interpretation is extracted from the very actualising of interpretation itself. With reference to Frege’s method, which was elaborated in the introduction to this dissertation, a marker like ‘dog’ can be made to denote all species of canine. However, the concept of ‘dog’ does not function in this notational way. In other words, the conceptual interpretation of ‘dog’ is independent of any thing that it refers to or may come to reference in the future (i.e., there is nothing ‘outside’ of ‘dog’). Hence, interpretation operates on a plane that is self-positing, which results in an infinite proliferation of the re/un/folding.

Second, as something that creates, the interpretative is considered to be ‘indivisible’, ‘continuous’ and ‘singular’. And so, the wholesomeness of every interpretation is affirmed by a plurality that emerges as a singularity. For instance, an interpretation is determined by its own possible interpretables. That is to say, the creating of every interpretation is equivalent to a specific actualisation which is really the ‘end-

product’ of an open-ended experiment. Thus interpretation and its creativity enable the development, as well as the production of the interpretable(s). Further, an interpretation achieves this ‘end’ by stipulating a fundamental consistency (i.e., singularity) upon the varying components. Thus, a pure creating ‘becomes’ because the homogeneity of an interpretation (re)connects and re-connects a host of heterogeneous interpretables—transversality. For instance, to a large extent, Bergson’s concept of memory is comprised of three aspects: perception, dualism and (un)consciousness. It is apparent that as he proceeds to explicate the nature and existence of memory, the subject of ontology is being broached. In fact, in *Matter in Memory*, Bergson offers his point of view on issues, including the metaphysical problem of existence and the forms/natures of memory, which seem to be responding to Heidegger’s notion of being⁷³. Hence, an interpretation renders within itself a tapestry of becomings that are inseparable.

Third, interpretation creates interpretables in the absence of conditions that pre-exist (i.e, there is no *a priori*). Otherwise, interpretation and its ability to create will be contained (and hindered) by the already constituted. Therefore, the interpretative initiates new possibilities and fresh relations⁷⁴ by working through a virtual, rather than an actual plane⁷⁵. And, this creating/making multiplies within a liberated immediacy that enhances

⁷³ In *Being and Time* (pp. 500-501), Heidegger suggests that Bergson’s theory reverses Platonism without being free of it.

⁷⁴ With reference to Structuralism, relations between markers are thought to be sustained through two functions: continuity (i.e., syntagmatic relation) and substitutability (i.e., paradigmatic function)—the signifier and signified cohere. However, if “fresh relations” are to be created, both the signifier and the signified must intra-play within themselves and inter-play within each other—the signifier and signified are unmediated; simulacra. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze asserts that “The simulacrum is an image without resemblance” (257). It is “the simultaneity of a becoming whose characteristics is to elude the present [. . .] a pure becoming without measure, a veritable becoming-mad, which never rests” (1).

⁷⁵ With reference to Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of ‘concept’. They say, “the concept is not given, it is created; it is to be created. It is not formed but posits itself in itself – it is self-positing. Creation and self-positing mutually imply each other because what is truly created [. . .] thereby enjoys a self-positing of

its own be-ing: the actual extension of a virtual creative potentiality. According to Deleuze and Guattari,

The virtual is no longer the chaotic virtual but rather virtuality that has become consistent, that has become an entity formed on a plane of immanence that sections the chaos. This is what we call Event, or the part that eludes its own actualisation in everything that happens [. . .] It is the virtual that is distinct from the actual [. . . it] has become consistent or real on the plane of immanence [. . .] it is a virtual that is real without being actual, ideal without being abstract. The event might seem to be transcendent because it surveys the state of affairs, but it is pure immanence that gives it the capacity to survey itself by itself on the plane. What is transcendent, transdescendent, is the state of affairs in which the event is actualised.

(Philosophy? 156)

For instance, an interpretation represents the actualisation of a virtual potential. Also, the possibilities that emerge within an interpretation co-exist without any one schema being determined by the other. Thus, as a product of a synthesised discourse, the act of interpretation produces a set of internal dynamics, whereby interpretables interact. Although the actualised is constitutive of itself, this absoluteness is underscored by a fundamental oneness. And, this single-ness is the affect of an experimental force. In short, whilst the possibilities of interpreting something are distinct and unique, they fold

itself, or an autopoietic characteristic by which it is recognised. The concept posits itself to the same extent that it is created. What depends on a free creativity is also that which, independently and necessarily posit itself in itself: the most subjective will be the most objective” *(Philosophy? 11)*.

into one another to express a singularity. In the case of this discussion, this homogeneity determines the primacy of interpretation.

To a large extent, interpretation is neither an unknowable nor hidden process (c.f., Bergson, *Matter* 73). First, the means that lead to an interpretation, such as seeing, perceiving and interpreting, are not solely responsible for the creating of an interpretable. That is, 'seeing', 'perceiving' and 'interpreting' are merely instruments that contribute to the making of an interpretation. Second, interpretability cannot be conceived apart from the be-come-ing that produces it. This 'in-itself-ness' is that which articulates the being of interpretation. Thus, interpretation is an unfolding that enables a multiplicity of creations; the plane of interpretation can be described as an 'inclusive' structure that encompasses all creations in and within itself—the creating of pure interpretation.

Hence, the presentness of an interpretation must be thought of as a production that proceeds within the dynamics of a pure becoming. The existence of interpretation is described as a presence that creates nothing beyond it-self. In other words, the interpretable unfolds a plane of immanence that is immanent only to itself through it-self. So, the effect of a total commitment to purity is that interpretation ceases to be subordinated to Interpretation (e.g., Platonism), or to a divine transcendence (e.g., St. Augustine), or to a subjective consciousness (e.g., Descartes). Thus, the interpretable can only be expressed as a pure interiority. As such, apart from the to-be-interpreted, nothing else can represent the yet-to-be-interpreted. And, because every interpretable is a creating, interpretation and its creativity is ultimately profiled by the infinite and the uncompleted.

Presently, it is pertinent for the *Conclusion* to provide possible answers to the following questions. How does interpretation relate itself to it-self? Is it appropriate to assume that there is a correlation between interpretations to begin with? If indeed there is a relationship to speak about, how can it be understood, especially when interrelations between interpretation (as purported in this discussion) are constituted by a repeating difference? Can the theory of interpretation that this thesis asserts provide a coherent explanation for the repeatability of differentiality-in-itself? Succinctly, how should this process, which operates between two and more independent interpretables, be addressed?

Prior to responding to the abovementioned questions, it is probably necessary to briefly recollect some of the key ideas that have been presented throughout the course of this dissertation. First, a multiplicity of multiplicities is privileged over the unities of a Unity. Second, experiential transcendentalness opens up new potentialities, relations and planes. Third, the becoming of *-ing* perpetuates a return of difference within the continual production of events. Fourth, the be-come-ing of the be-coming ensures an immanent producing that takes place within and through every repetition. Fifth, emphasis is being placed on the undeterminate (i.e., ‘. . .’), rather than the definitive (i.e., ‘is’). All in all, this dissertation interprets interpretation to the creation of a plane upon which inter-relations are being intra-established. Therefore, interpretation is a manifestation of an infinite many-ness, which transcends any specificity and context. The return-ness within interpretation is “at once both production of repetition on the basis of difference and selection of difference on the basis of repetition” (Deleuze, *Difference* 51-52).

This thesis is concerned with a logic of interpretation, whereby the concept of interpretability is liberated from those interpretations that imprison it (c.f., Deleuze,

Difference xv). Subsequently, in order to examine how interpretation differs and defers with itself (i.e., the immediacy of interpretation) there is a necessity to study the dynamics which constitute it. Presently, it is apparent that the making of an interpretation is determined by a self-affirming force. Deleuze describes this self-affirmation as an internal, absolute and ultimate difference, which cannot be deemed as the empirical difference between two things (*Proust* 41). So, the determination of a deferring difference is dependent on the immediate—the differing and deferring differs and defers from nothing that is external to itself. Furthermore, the intra-relation of two things (in-themselves) is marked by the actualisation of a virtualness which is inherent within them. This is to say, the becoming of some thing to some other thing foregrounds the potential for the actualisation of becoming-other. For instance, a model aeroplane moves freely within a spatial dimensionality that is pre-scribed by its physical make-up. Furthermore, this single space encapsulates all the possible movements that it may exhibit (i.e., a singular plural).

Hence, the interpretability of something, say ‘x’, is not dependent on its difference from another something, say ‘y’. Concisely, the differing, the virtuality and the creating of an interpretation is not determinable, or mediated by that which it differs from, or realised as an actualised state; interpretability is underscored by the unilateral and non-relational. After all, the be-come-ing of a multiplicity-in-itself cannot be distinctly determined because one becoming is instantaneously differed and deferred by another. So, instead of relating the difference between two interpretables, the interpretability of an interpretation yields a differencing that inevitably creates more and more interpretables. For instance, the difference between ‘dog’ and ‘cat’ is not marked by

the difference between ‘d-o-g’ and ‘c-a-t’. Rather, the difference that ‘dog’ or ‘cat’ produces highlights the manifestation of a variability within ‘d-o-g’ or ‘c-a-t’ itself (i.e., a pure creation).

If virtual actualities, which makes the becoming of an interpretable, are not demonstrated by relations that are ‘empirical’ in essence, how can interpretation come into being then? Consider this proposition: A actual virtual becomes a virtual actual due to some ‘thing’ that must remain not-discernable—the lacking. Further, the undiscernableness of this ‘lack’ is the thing that affirms the momentary passing of in-between-ness between all interpretables: the no-thing. Thus, the absolute inter-relations between interpretables are conceived in terms of pure intra-relations between ‘nothings’. This theory, which attempts to explain the concept of nothingness, is a logic that seeks to account for the perennial birthing of the undeterminate: the lacking: the not-there. In other words, no-thing-ness is the pure between-ness that relates the becoming between interpretables (i.e., a between between no-things). From Nietzsche’s standpoint, this

1. be[-]coming does *not* aim at a *final state*, does not flow into ‘being’.
2. becoming is *not an illusory state*; the world of *being* may be an illusion
3. becoming has equal value at every moment: the sum of its values remain the same; *in other words, it has no value at all*, for there is nothing against which it could be measured and in relation to which the word ‘value’ have meaning.

(*Writings* 212)

All in all, an important aspect of this dissertation is the wish to address the elusive lack and illustrate its negated no-thingness. To put it in another way, the discussion seeks

to explicate the question, ‘What is interpretation?’ In order to approach this issue, the thesis deploys a two-part strategy. In one part, interpretation is examined as a function. And in the other, interpretation is examined as an entity.

To demonstrate how interpretation functions, this dissertation has attempted to show how meaning is made. Examples include the ‘paradox of heap’, a reading of *Heart of Darkness* and an interpretation of Deleuze interpreting Proust, demonstrate how a piece of work yields a text (c.f., Roland Barthes, ‘From Work to Text’). Perhaps, for a moment, the methodology employed to interpret these works may come across as somewhat ‘Structuralist’⁷⁶. That is, the interpretation of interpretation is created by difference and functions as a difference. In this instance, the interpretability of interpretation is enabled by a chain of differences, where ‘x’ is differentiated from ‘y’ because it neither looks, nor sounds like ‘y’, and vice versa. Although interpretation acquires its polysemic nature as a result of this differentiation, this over-determination remains to be an effect of a coherent relation/connection between markers that exist in an idiom. As such, interpretation is some thing that possesses the potential to unfold in excess; its functioning is affirmed by the repeating and the differencing.

Furthermore, interpretation and its repeated differentiation account for, in this dissertation anyway, the nothingness that has come to characterise the interpretative. Hence, the opening which is sanctioned by the re-differentiating points to an ontological gap that is in essence, nothing. According to Deleuze, “In this relation, being is difference itself. Being is also non-being, [and] *non-being is not the being of the negative*; [. . .] on

⁷⁶ An interpretation’s difference from another interpretation appears to be relational in nature i.e., the distinction lies in ‘this’ interpretation being different from ‘that’ interpretation’. For instance, Saussure purports that because of a difference in their phonetic value, ‘x’ is set apart from ‘y’. Thus, the difference between ‘x’ and ‘y’ is determined through a relation.

the contrary, non-being is Difference [. . .] For this reason non-being should rather be written (non) -being or, better still, ?-being” (*Difference* 66-67). So, interpretation is determined by a varying that opens up within its own differentiability and deferentiality. This absolute becoming of a pure interpretable is immanently diverged and displaced within itself. This widening circularity, which re/un/folds into the differentiation of a decentring and disguising differentiation⁷⁷, disseminates a distribution that bears the becoming of each and every interpretation. It is the one and only force that immediately and singularly determines an undeterminable creation: the singular plurality of interpretation: $\frac{\text{virtual/real(actualisation)}}{\text{actual/real(actualisation)}} - \frac{\text{virtual/real(actualisation)}}{\text{actual/real(actualisation)}} . . . \infty$

In retrospect, this dissertation is an attempt to study how the issue of meaning-making is itself guided by another relation: Being and Interpretation. The engagement with interpretation and its being and becoming form the basis for the thesis to engage with concepts, including (un)representation, (un)mediation, (un)determination and (ex-)interiority. As the dissertation embraces uncomplete singularity and yet-to-be affirmativity, it thinks that interpretation is really a creative event: the being of a becoming. In return, the becoming of interpretation is sustained by the presentness of multiplicities that expand within an unrepresentable unity: the becoming of a being. In short, this dissertation seeks to deliver a theory of interpretation that places primacy on the absent: the no-thing:—ing. At the heart of interpretation, there is some ‘thing’ that defies all appropriation of itself as ‘it self’: it abandons its self; this ‘thing’ is nothing

⁷⁷ Deleuze puts forward that “with actualisation, a new type of specific and partitive distinction takes the place of the fluent ideal distinctions. We call the determination of the virtual content an Idea differentiation; we call the actualisation of that virtuality into species and distinguished parts differentiation. It is always in relation to a differentiated problem or to the differentiated conditions of a problem that a differentiation of species and parts is carried out [. . .] (*Difference* 258).

other than the immanent immobility of the fact that there are things—the supplementary memorial of the immemorial thing (Nancy 169).

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